اِنَّ ۙ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَ ٰهدِ لِلَّتِ ىۡ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِ ۡنَ الَّذِ ۡنَ يَعْمَلُ ۡنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِ ۡرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi

Surah11 – Hud (The Prophet Hud)

سُوۡرَةُ هُوۡدٍ مَكِّيَّةٌ

بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِيۡمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate**)**

الٓرٰ ۚ كِتٰبٌ اُحۡكِمَتۡ اٰيٰتُهٗ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتۡ مِنۡ لَّدُنۡ حَكِيۡمٍ خَبِيۡرٍ ۙ

(11-1) Alif. Lam. Ra. This is a Divine Command
(1) whose contents have been made firm and set forth in detail
(2) from One Who is All-Wise, All-Aware

(1) The Arabic word kitab has been translated into Book because of the context. For its meaning is not confined to book or something written but it includes command and sovereign decree as well and has been used in several places in the Quran in the same sense.

(2) The contents of this Book are firm, strong, and unchangeable: they are well balanced and measured. There is no tinge of verbosity, pedantry, volubility, poetic fancy and rhetorical exaggeration. The truth has been stated accurately, and there is nothing more and nothing less than the truth. Moreover, the contents have been given in detail and everything has been made so clear and plain that there is neither confusion nor complication nor ambiguity in it.

اَلَّا تَعۡبُدُوۡۤا اِلَّا اللّٰہَ ؕ اِنَّنِیۡ لَکُمۡ مِّنۡہُ نَذِیۡرٌ وَّ بَشِیۡرٌ ۙ﴿۲﴾

(11-2) that you may worship none but Allah. Verily, I have come to you as a warner and a bearer of good news from Him

وَّ اَنِ اسۡتَغۡفِرُوۡا رَبَّکُمۡ ثُمَّ تُوۡبُوۡۤا اِلَیۡہِ یُمَتِّعۡکُمۡ مَّتَاعًا حَسَنًا اِلٰۤی اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّی وَّ یُؤۡتِ کُلَّ ذِیۡ فَضۡلٍ فَضۡلَہٗ ؕ وَ اِنۡ تَوَلَّوۡا فَاِنِّیۡۤ اَخَافُ عَلَیۡکُمۡ عَذَابَ یَوۡمٍ کَبِیۡرٍ ؕ﴿۳﴾

(11-3) that you may seek forgiveness of your Lord and turn to Him in repentance whereupon He will grant you a fair enjoyment of life until an appointed term, (3) and will bestow favor on everyone who merits favor. (4) But should you turn away (from the truth), I fear for you the chastisement of an Awesome Day.

(3) The assurance that “He will let you enjoy a fair provision for a term appointed” has been given to remove the misunderstanding which Satan has imbued in the heart of every foolish worshiper of the world that piety ruins one’s worldly life, though it might lead to one’s success in the Hereafter. Allah has reassured the true believers that He will shower His blessings on God fearing people and they will live happy and peaceful lives and will be honored and respected everywhere. The same thing has been stated in a different manner in (Surah An-Nahal, Ayat 97): “Whoso will do good deeds, whether a man or a woman, provided the one is a believer, We will surely make such a one lead a pure and clean life in this world.” Allah has refuted this theory of Satan and his disciples that piety inevitably brings poverty, distress and affliction and ignominy to the person who adopts truth, righteousness and virtue. He has assured that He will make the life of the one who will believe in Him and adopt a righteous life truly successful both in this world and in the Hereafter. And it is common experience that only those people enjoy real peace of mind and are honored and respected who are God fearing and possess a pure character, who are fair and generous in all their affairs and dealings and who are free from evil. For they are trusted by all and none fears any wrong or wickedness from them.

According to the Quran, the provisions of life are either mataul-hasana meaning good provisions or mataul-ghuroor meaning deceptive provisions. Here those, who return to Allah, have been assured that they will be given good provisions of life and not deceptive ones. The provisions are good if their recipient becomes even more grateful to Allah than before and uses these for fulfilling His rights and the rights of mankind and of his own self. Such good provisions make his life truly successful in this world and also in the next world. On the contrary, the provisions are deceptive, if they become a temptation for the recipient, and get him involved in the worship of the things of this world more than before. Though the deceptive provisions might appear to be a blessing and a favor, these are, in fact, a curse and means of some future torment.

(4) This verse enunciates a fundamental divine principle. The higher a person rises in character and conduct, the higher is the rank he obtains in the sight of Allah. That is to say that Allah does not let go waste the good deed of anyone. He does neither appreciate any evil deed, nor detracts from any good deed. Everyone will be given the honor which he deserves for his deeds.

اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرۡجِعُكُمۡ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ۝۴

(11-4) Unto Allah is your return, and He has power to do everything.

اَلَا اِنَّهُمۡ يَثۡنُوۡنَ صُدُوۡرَهُمۡ لِيَسۡتَخۡفُوۡا مِنۡهُ ؕ اَلَا حِيۡنَ يَسۡتَغۡشُوۡنَ ثِيَابَهُمۡ ۙ يَعۡلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّوۡنَ وَمَا يُعۡلِنُوۡنَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ عَلِيۡمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوۡرِ ۝۵

(11-5) Lo! They fold up their breasts that they may conceal themselves from Him. (5) Surely when they cover themselves up with their garments Allah knows well what they cover and what they reveal. Indeed He even knows the secrets hidden in the breasts.

(5) They were those people of Makkah, who though not very active in their antagonism against the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him), nevertheless were very averse to it. Therefore they did not like to hear it nor come face to face with him, and did their very best to avoid him. If, by chance, they found him sitting somewhere and talking to the people, they would at once turn back on their heels. Or if they saw him coming towards them, they would slink away or hide their faces with cloth for fear that he might address them and convey his message to them. As they did not have the courage to face the truth, they would bury their heads ostrich-like and make believe that the reality from which they were hiding had disappeared, whereas it was all along there and watching their ridiculous attempts to hide from it.

وَمَا مِنۡ دَآبَّةٍ فِى الۡاَرۡضِ اِلَّا عَلَى اللّٰهِ رِزۡقُهَا وَيَعۡلَمُ مُسۡتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسۡتَوۡدَعَهَا ؕ كُلٌّ فِىۡ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيۡنٍ ۝۶

(11-6) There is not a single moving creature on the earth but Allah is responsible for providing its sustenance. He knows where it dwells and where it will permanently rest. (6) All this is recorded in a clear Book.

(6) That is, it is foolish on your part to deceive yourselves that you can escape punishment by hiding yourselves from Allah Who has full and perfect knowledge of everything. Who knows the nest where the tiniest sparrow lives and the hole where the smallest insect resides, and provides their sustenance to them wherever they be. Who knows the dwelling place and the final resting place of every creature and gives life and death to them

at the appointed time. Do you think that by hiding yourselves from His messenger, you can also hide yourselves from the All-Knowing Sovereign Who has sent him? Do you think that Allah does not see His messenger doing his very best to convey His message to you and you are trying to turn a deaf ear to it?

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ فِيْ سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ وَّكَانَ عَرْشُهٗ عَلَى الْمَآءِ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ اَيُّكُمْ اَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۭ وَلَىِٕنْ قُلْتَ اِنَّكُمْ مَّبْعُوْثُوْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ الْمَوْتِ لَيَقُوْلَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝

(11-7) And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and [before that] His Throne was upon the water (7) that He may test you, who of you is better in conduct (8) If you were to say (O Muhammad): 'All of you will surely be raised after death', then those who disbelieve will certainly say: 'This is nothing but plain sorcery. (9)

(7) This is a parenthetical clause that has probably been inserted in answer to a question, which has not been cited: if the heavens and the earth were created afterwards in six days, what was there before their creation? The answer is: then there was water. It is not possible for us to say what exactly was the nature of that water. It might have been the common fluid known by that name. Or perhaps, the word water has been used as a symbol for the fluid state of the matter before it was changed to its present form. As regards to “His Throne was upon the water” I am of the opinion that it means: “His Kingdom was over water.”

(8) This enunciates the purpose of the creation: Allah created the heavens and the earth for the sake of the creation of mankind and He created mankind to test human beings by delegating to them the powers of vicegerency and making them morally responsible for using or abusing them, just as they liked. Thus it has been emphasized that the sole purpose of the creation is the moral trial of man and his consequent accountability to the Creator for the use or abuse of the delegated powers, and the award of rewards and punishments. For without this basic purpose, the whole work of creation would have become meaningless and useless.

(9) That is, the disbelievers very foolishly considered the purpose of the creation to be no more than a pastime in which they themselves were mere playthings. They were so absorbed in their foolish conception that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) told them what the real purpose of creation was and what part they were required to play in it, they would scoff at him, saying: Your message is like a piece of sorcery and beyond our understanding.

وَلَئِنۡ اَخَّرۡنَا عَنۡهُمُ الۡعَذَابَ اِلٰٓى اُمَّةٍ مَّعۡدُوۡدَةٍ لَّيَقُوۡلُنَّ مَا يَحۡبِسُهٗ ؕ اَلَا يَوۡمَ يَاۡتِيۡهِمۡ لَيۡسَ مَصۡرُوۡفًا
عَنۡهُمۡ وَحَاقَ بِهِمۡ مَّا كَانُوۡا بِهٖ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُوۡنَ ﴿۸﴾

(11-8) And were We to put off the chastisement from them for a determined period, they will cry out: 'What withholds Him from chastising?' Surely when the day of the chastisement will come, nothing will avert it and the chastisement which they had ridiculed shall encompass them.

وَلَئِنۡ اَذَقۡنَا الۡاِنۡسَانَ مِنَّا رَحۡمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعۡنٰهَا مِنۡهُ اِنَّهٗ لَيَـُٔوۡسٌ كَفُوۡرٌ ﴿۹﴾

(11-9) If We ever favor man with Our Mercy, and then take it away from him, he becomes utterly desperate, totally ungrateful.

وَلَئِنۡ اَذَقۡنٰهُ نَعۡمَآءَ بَعۡدَ ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتۡهُ لَيَقُوۡلَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّاٰتُ عَنِّىۡ ؕ اِنَّهٗ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُوۡرٌ ۝١٠

(11-10) And if We let him taste favor after harm has touched him, he says: 'All my ills are gone', and he suddenly becomes exultant and boastful, (10)

(10) This disgraceful characteristic of man has been mentioned here because the disbelievers were exhibiting it at that time. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) warned them of the consequences of their disobedience to Allah, they would scoff at him as if to say: Are you mad? Can't you see our prosperity and power? We are enjoying all the good things of life and dominating over everything and everyone all around us. How is it that you are prophesying torment for us?

The above mentioned arrogant behavior was due to the disgraceful human characteristic which has been mentioned in this verse. It is this: Man is, by nature, shallow and superficial and lacks the depth of thought. Therefore, when he enjoys prosperity and power he becomes joyous, arrogant and boastful; so much so that he never even dreams of any possibility that his happy condition would ever come to an end. And if and when adversity befalls him, he becomes an embodiment of despair and begins to complain of his misfortune here, there, and everywhere; so much so that he does not hesitate even to abuse God and taunt at His Godhead. But whenever there is a change for the better in his fortune, he again begins to brag of his foresight, wisdom and success. That is why the disbelievers were exhibiting such a shallow and superficial characteristic in answer to the warning of the Prophet (peace be upon him). They forgot that Allah was deferring their punishment because of His mercy to give them sufficient time to consider well their absurd attitude and mend their ways during the respite given to them, and not to delude themselves by imagining that their prosperity had very deep foundations and would last forever.

اِلَّا الَّذِيۡنَ صَبَرُوۡا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ مَّغۡفِرَةٌ وَّاَجۡرٌ كَبِيۡرٌ ۝١١

(11-11) except those who are patient [11] and act righteously. Such shall have Allah's forgiveness and a great reward. [12]

(11) Here sabr (fortitude) also implies another meaning, that is, steadfastness, the antonym of shallowness etc. that has been mentioned in the preceding verse. Those “Who are steadfast” remain fine and unwavering in their purpose in spite of the vicissitudes of life. They are not influenced by the changes of circumstances but stick to the right reasonable and correct attitudes they have adopted. They do not give themselves airs nor become intoxicated nor over jubilant and boastful if they win power, prosperity and name. On the contrary, they are neither subdued nor depressed if they are visited by adversity. In short, they come out successful in their trial by Allah, whether it be in the shape of favor or adversity and remain steadfast in both the cases.

(12) This is the favor that Allah shows to such people; He forgives their shortcomings and gives them rich rewards for their good deeds.

فَلَعَلَّكَ تَارِكٌۢ بَعۡضَ مَا يُوۡحٰۤى اِلَيۡكَ وَضَآئِقٌۢ بِهٖ صَدۡرُكَ اَنۡ يَّقُوۡلُوۡا لَوۡلَاۤ اُنۡزِلَ عَلَيۡهِ كَنۡزٌ اَوۡ جَآءَ مَعَهٗ مَلَكٌ ؕ اِنَّمَاۤ اَنۡتَ نَذِيۡرٌ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ وَّكِيۡلٌ ؕ ﴿۱۲﴾

(11-12) (O Messenger!) Let it not happen that you omit (to expound) a portion of what was revealed to you. And do not be distressed that they will say: 'Why was a treasure not bestowed upon him?' or 'Why did no angel accompany him?' For you are merely a warner, whereas Allah has control over everything. [13]

(13) In this verse, Allah has comforted and urged His Messenger (peace be upon him) to propagate the message without the least hesitation and not to waver in his determination for fear of ridicule or for lack of response from his people. He should convey the message in its entirety and leave the result to Allah for He has full power over everything. In order to grasp its

full significance, we should keep in view the circumstances that necessitated it.

At the time of this revelation, the Quraish were the most powerful and influential of all the clans. As they were the guardians of the Kabah (Makkah), the religious center of the Arabs, they enjoyed religious, economic, and political superiority over the entire Arabia. Thus it was quite natural that they should resent and oppose that message which proclaimed: “The religion of which you are the leaders is absolutely false, and the system of life you are following is rotten to the core. As you are rejecting the message, torment of Allah is threatening you. The only way of escape from it is that you should accept the right way and the righteous system of life I have brought from Allah.” Obviously this message struck a hard blow at their superiority and therefore they were averse to it from the very beginning.

The second reason why they did not accept it was that the Messenger (peace be upon him) possessed nothing extraordinary to convince the people of his Prophethood except his pure character and his rational, and understandable message. Then for the Quraish, there was nothing to warrant a torment from Allah except the rotten condition of their religion, morality and culture. On the contrary, there was prosperity to delude them that that was a sure sign of the favors of Allah and of their gods and goddesses, which was a clear proof that the ways they were following were the right ways. The inevitable result was that only a small minority of those people, who had sound minds and hearts, accepted the message and the remaining large majority became hostile to it. Then some of them tried to suppress the message by persecutions and some did their worst to defame it by false accusations and frivolous objections and others resorted to calculated indifference to discourage it. There were still others who adopted an attitude of ridicule, derision, taunt and mockery in order to make light of it.

The above condition went on for many years and was liable to fill one with despair and discouragement. Therefore the Sovereign reassured His Messenger, as if to say, “We disapprove

of these shallow, superficial and mean people, who are trying to make your mission a failure by their prejudice, indifference, ridicule, mockery and frivolous objections. You should go on following the right way with perseverance and courage: you should go on proclaiming the truth that has been revealed to you without the least hesitation: you should never be afraid of propagating the message for fear of ridicule or indifference: you should go on inculcating the truth in its entirety whether anyone accepts it or rejects it for it is Allah Who has everything in His power and charge and He alone affords guidance to everyone He considers fit for it."

اَ مۡ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ افۡتَرٰىهُ ؕ قُلۡ فَاۡتُوۡا بِعَشۡرِ سُوَرٍ مِّثۡلِهٖ مُفۡتَرَيٰتٍ وَّ ادۡعُوۡا مَنِ اسۡتَطَعۡتُمۡ مِّنۡ
دُوۡنِ اللّٰهِ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ صٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

(11-13) Do they say: 'He has invented this Book himself?' Say: 'If that is so, bring ten surahs the like of it of your composition, and call upon all (the deities) you can other than Allah to your help. Do so if you are truthful.'

فَاِلَّمۡ يَسۡتَجِيۡبُوۡا لَكُمۡ فَاعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّمَاۤ اُنۡزِلَ بِعِلۡمِ اللّٰهِ وَاَنۡ لَّاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ فَهَلۡ اَنۡتُمۡ
مُّسۡلِمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

(11-14) Then if (your deities) do not respond to your call for help then feel assured that this Book was revealed with the knowledge of Allah, and that there is no true god but Him. Will you, then, surrender (to this truth)? (14)

(14) Here one and the same argument has been advanced to prove two things. First, the Quran has been revealed by Allah. Secondly, it proves the truth of the doctrine of Tauhid. The argument is this:

(1) You say that the Quran has not been revealed by Allah but has been devised and invented by myself and ascribed to Him. If your claim had been genuine you would have been able to invent a book like this in answer to the challenge I have given you over and over again. As you have failed to do so even with your combined resources and forces, my claim that it

has been revealed with Allah’s knowledge has been proved absolutely and completely true.

(2) Then there was a twofold challenge from the Quran to your deities but they utterly failed to meet it. They were challenged to come to your aid and help produce a book like the Quran. As they have not helped you, it is a clear proof that they are absolutely powerless and have no share at all in Godhead. You have seen that they have not only failed in this decisive test, but have also proved to be impotent to defend themselves against the open attacks made on them in this Book, which asks the people not to worship them for they have no share in the powers of Godhead. These things have proved that there is nothing divine in them and you have made them your deities without rhyme or reason.

Incidentally, this verse shows that chronologically this Surah was revealed earlier than Surah Yunus. For at first they were challenged in this Surah to bring ten Surahs like the Surahs of the Quran, but they failed to do so. Then in Surah Yunus they were challenged (Ayat 38 and E.N. 46) to bring even one Surah like this.

هَ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الۡحَيٰوةَ الدُّنۡيَا وَ زِيۡنَتَهَا نُوَفِّ اِلَيۡهِمۡ اَعۡمَالَهُمۡ فِيۡهَا وَهُمۡ فِيۡهَا لَا يُبۡخَسُوۡنَ ﴿۱۵﴾

(11-15) Those who seek merely the present world and its adornment. (15) We fully recompense them for their work in this world, and they are made to suffer no diminution in it concerning what is their due.

(15) This general statement has been made in continuation of the theme of the preceding verses, to refute the false excuses of the disbelievers mentioned therein for rejecting the message of the Quran. This verse says that in general those people who rejected the Quran then (and are rejecting it now) were the worshipers of this world and its pleasures. As the root cause of their rejection was (and is) this false creed that there is nothing more valuable than the pleasures of this world and its material gains. And there should be no restrictions, like the ones imposed in the Quran, on their acquisition. They first made this choice, and afterwards invented arguments, like the ones mentioned in the Quran, to deceive their own minds and those of others.

اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيۡنَ لَيۡسَ لَهُمۡ فِى الۡاٰخِرَةِ اِلَّا النَّارُ وَ حَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوۡا فِيۡهَا وَبٰطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوۡا يَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ﴿۱۶﴾

(11-16) They are the ones who shall have nothing in the Hereafter except Fire. (16) (There they shall come to know) that their deeds in the world have come to naught; and that whatever they have done is absolutely useless.

(16) This is a clear and stern warning to the worshipers of the world. They should know that they will get the full reward for the exertions (whatever they be) they put forth in order to acquire the worldly gains but they should note it well that they would get nothing in the next world. As they confined their efforts to the benefits of this world, and did nothing to earn the benefits of the next world, they should expect nothing for the deeds they have done for the material gains of this world. In order to illustrate this, let us take the case of a person who desires to build a palace for himself in this world and adopts all those devices, measures and means which help build such a palace. Most surely, he will

succeed in building a grand palace, for no brick will refuse to stick to its place simply because he was an unbeliever. But it is equally obvious that he shall have to leave behind in this world that grand palace along with all its furnishings as soon as he breathes his last breath. For there is no reason why the palace he had built (or done anything else) for this world, should be credited to him in the next world, if he had done nothing to provide himself with a palace in the next world. For only those who provide for themselves with the necessary material for a palace in the next world in accordance with the divine law, deserve to get a palace there.

Now a question arises in regard to the logical conclusion of this argument, according to which he should not get a palace in the next world. It is this: “Well, he may not get a palace, but why should he be thrown into the fire of Hell?” The answer is this (and the Quran itself has given this same answer in different places) that the one who exerts and works only for a palace in this world in utter disregard of the Hereafter, naturally and inevitably adopts such treasures and means as help build a large fire for himself in the Hell. (Refer to (E.N. 12 of Surah Yunus).

اَفَمَن كَانَ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهٖ وَ يَتۡلُوۡهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنۡهُ وَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِهٖ كِتٰبُ مُوۡسٰۤى اِمَامًا وَّ رَحۡمَةً ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِهٖ ؕ وَ مَنۡ يَّكۡفُرۡ بِهٖ مِنَ الۡاَحۡزَابِ فَالنَّارُ مَوۡعِدُهٗ ۚ فَلَا تَكُ فِىۡ مِرۡيَةٍ مِّنۡهُ ۫ اِنَّهُ الۡحَـقُّ مِنۡ رَّبِّكَ وَ لٰكِنَّ اَكۡثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ ﴿۱۷﴾

(11-17) Can it happen that he who takes his stand on a clear evidence from his Lord, (17) subsequently followed by a witness from Him (in his support), (18) and prior to that the Book of Moses was revealed as a guide and a mercy, (would even he deny the truth in the manner of those who adore the life of this world)? Rather, such men are bound to believe in it. (19) The Fire shall be the promised resort of the groups that disbelieve. So be in no doubt about it for this indeed is the truth from your Lord although most people do not believe.

(17) This shows that even apart from revelation, there is ample evidence in man’s own self, in the structure of the heavens and the earth, and in the order that prevails in the universe to

prove that God is the only creator, master, lord and sovereign of the universe. The evidence referred to above also inclines man to believe that the present life will be followed by another one in which man will be required to render an account of his deeds and wherein he might be requited.

(18) The “witness from Him” is the Quran. The testimony of the natural phenomena combined with that provided by man’s own self had already created in man the disposition to affirm the truths mentioned earlier. All that was further reinforced by the Quran which came as reassurance that what he was predisposed to believe in was indeed true.

(19) In the present context the verse means that those who are overly infatuated with the allurements of a worldly life will be inclined to reject the message of the Quran. Distinguishable from these are those who take full note of the testimony furnished by their own beings and by the structure and order prevailing in the universe in support of God’s unity. This testimony was further reinforced by the heavenly books revealed before the Quran. How could such persons close their eyes to such overwhelming testimony as this and join their voice with those of the unbelievers?

This verse clearly indicates that even before the Quran was revealed, the Prophet (peace be on him) had reached the stage of belief in the Unseen. We have seen, in (Surah Al- Anam Ayat 75), the case of Abraham. Before being appointed as a Prophet, Abraham (peace be on him) was led by a careful observation of the natural phenomena to knowledge of God’s unity. Likewise, the present verse makes it clear that by his reflection, the Prophet (peace be on him), had been led to believe in the Unseen even before the Quran was revealed. Subsequently, when the Quran was revealed it not only confirmed what he had already become inclined to accept, but also provided definite knowledge about it.

وَمَنۡ اَظۡلَمُ مِمَّنِ افۡتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ يُعۡرَضُوۡنَ عَلٰى رَبِّهِمۡ وَيَقُوۡلُ الۡاَشۡهَادُ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ الَّذِيۡنَ كَذَبُوۡا عَلٰى رَبِّهِمۡ ۚ اَلَا لَعۡنَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ۙ١٨

(11-18) And who is a greater wrong-doer than he who invents a lie against Allah? (20) Such men will be set forth before their Lord and witnesses will say: 'These are the ones who lied against their Lord. Lo! Allah's curse be upon the wrong-doers; (21)

(20) To invent a lie against God consists of stating that beings other than God also have a share with God in His godhead, that like God they are also entitled to be served and worshiped by God's creatures. Inventing a lie against God also consists of stating that God is not concerned with providing guidance to His creatures, that He did not raise Prophets for that purpose, and that He rather left men free to behave as they pleased. Inventing a lie against God also consists of stating that God created human beings by way of jest and sport and that He will not have them render an account to Him, and that He will not requite them for their deeds.

(21) Such a proclamation would be made on the Day of Judgment.

الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُم بِالْآخِرَةِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

(11-19) upon those (22) who bar people from the way of Allah, and seek in it crookedness, (23) and disbelieve in the Hereafter.

(22) This is a parenthetical statement. That is, that God's curse will be proclaimed in the Hereafter against those who are guilty of the crimes mentioned.

(23) Such persons do not like the straight way being expounded to them. They would rather have the straight way rendered crooked by altering it under the influence of lust, prejudice, fancy, and superstition. It is only after the way that was once straight has been rendered crooked that they will be willing to accept it.

أُولَٰئِكَ لَمْ يَكُونُوا مُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ يُضَاعَفُ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ ۚ مَا كَانُوا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ السَّمْعَ وَمَا كَانُوا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

(11-20) They had no power to frustrate Allah's design in the earth, [24] nor did they have any protectors against Allah. Their chastisement will be doubled. [25] They were unable to hear, nor could they see.

(24) This, again, refers to what will happen in the next life.

(25) They will suffer punishment for being in error and for misleading others and leaving behind a legacy of error and misguidance for coming generations. (Surah Al-Araf, E.N. 30).

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيۡنَ خَسِرُوۡۤا اَنۡفُسَهُمۡ وَضَلَّ عَنۡهُمۡ مَّا كَانُوۡا يَفۡتَرُوۡنَ ﴿٢١﴾

(11-21) They caused utter loss to themselves, and all that they had invented failed them. [26]

(26) All their conjectures regarding God, the universe and their own selves will prove to be absolutely baseless in the next life. Similarly, the notions they entertained about the help and support they would receive from those they considered to be either their deities, or their intercessors with God, or their patrons will prove to be false. Likewise, it will become obvious that all their notions about the Afterlife were utterly untrue.

لَا جَرَمَ اَنَّهُمۡ فِى الۡاٰخِرَةِ هُمُ الۡاَخۡسَرُوۡنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

(11-22) Doubtlessly, they shall be the greatest losers in the Hereafter.

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَاَخۡبَتُوۡۤا اِلٰى رَبِّهِمۡ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصۡحٰبُ الۡجَنَّةِ ۚ هُمۡ فِيۡهَا خٰلِدُوۡنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

(11-23) As for those who believed and acted righteously and dedicated themselves totally to their Lord -they are the people of Paradise, and there they shall abide forever. [27]

(27) This concludes the account about the Hereafter.

مَثَلُ الۡفَرِيۡقَيۡنِ كَالۡاَعۡمٰى وَ الۡاَصَمِّ وَ الۡبَصِيۡرِ وَ السَّمِيۡعِ ؕ هَلۡ يَسۡتَوِيٰنِ مَثَلًا ؕ اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُوۡنَ ۝٢٤

(11-24) The example of the two parties is that one is blind and deaf, and the other capable of seeing and hearing. Can the two be equals? (28) Will you, then, not heed?'

(28) Can the attitude and ultimate end of both these types of people be the same? Obviously, he who fails to see the right way and ignores the instruction of the guide who directs him to the right way will necessarily stumble and meet with some terrible mishap. However, he who perceives the right way and follows the instructions of his guide will reach his destination, and reach it safely.

The same difference is found between the two parties mentioned here. One of these carefully observes the realities of the universe and pays heed to the teachings of God's Messengers. The other party, however, neither uses their eyes properly to perceive God's signs nor pays heed to His Messengers. The behavior of the two parties is, therefore, bound to be different. And when their behavior is different, there is no reason to believe that their ultimate end will be identical.

وَ لَقَدۡ اَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوۡحًا اِلٰى قَوۡمِهٖۤ ۫ اِنِّىۡ لَكُمۡ نَذِيۡرٌ مُّبِيۡنٌ ۝٢٥

(11-25) (Such were the circumstances) when We sent forth Noah to his people. (29) (He said): 'I have been sent to you to warn you plainly

(29) (E.Ns 47-50 of Surah Al-Aaraf) should be kept in view.

اَنۡ لَّا تَعۡبُدُوۡۤا اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنِّىۡۤ اَخَافُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ عَذَابَ يَوۡمٍ اَلِيۡمٍ ۝٢٦

(11-26) that you may worship none but Allah or else I fear for you the chastisement of a Grievous Day. (30)

(30) This is the same thing that has been put into the mouth of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in (Ayats 2-3).

فَقَالَ الۡمَلَاُ الَّذِیۡنَ کَفَرُوۡا مِنۡ قَوۡمِہٖ مَا نَرٰىکَ اِلَّا بَشَرًا مِّثۡلَنَا وَ مَا نَرٰىکَ اتَّبَعَکَ اِلَّا الَّذِیۡنَ
ہُمۡ اَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِیَ الرَّاۡیِ ۚ وَ مَا نَرٰی لَکُمۡ عَلَیۡنَا مِنۡ فَضۡلٍ بَلۡ نَظُنُّکُمۡ کٰذِبِیۡنَ ﴿۲۷﴾

(11-27) The notables among Noah's own people, who had refused to follow him, responded: 'We merely consider you a human being like ourselves. (31) Nor do we find among those who follow you except the lowliest of our folk, the men who follow you without any proper reason. (32) We see nothing in you to suggest that you are any better than us. (33) Rather, we believe you to be liars.'

(31) The same foolish objection was being raised by the people against the Prophet (peace be upon him). They argued like this: You are a man like us: you eat and drink, you walk and sleep and have a family, and there is nothing in you that might show that you have been sent by God. (See E. N. Surah Yaseen).

(32) The big people of Makkah passed the same remarks about those who followed the Prophet (peace be upon him). They taunted him with things like these: Your followers consist of mere inexperienced boys or slaves or the lowest strata of society, in short, of such people as are credulous and lack commonsense and wisdom. Refer to (E.Ns 34-37 of Surah Al-Anam) and (E.N. 75 of Surah Yunus).

(33) This is to say, You claim that you are the favored ones of God Whose blessings are on you, and that those who do not follow your way are under His wrath. But the reverse of this is true for it is we who have been favored with wealth, servants and power and you possess nothing of the sort. Please point out anything in which you are superior to us.

قَالَ يٰقَوۡمِ اَرَءَيۡتُمۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنۡ رَّبِّىۡ وَاٰتٰٮنِىۡ رَحۡمَةً مِّنۡ عِنۡدِهٖ فَعُمِّيَتۡ عَلَيۡكُمۡ اَنُلۡزِمُكُمُوۡهَا وَاَنۡتُمۡ لَهَا كٰرِهُوۡنَ ۲۸

(11-28) Noah said: 'My people! If I base myself on a clear evidence from my Lord, and I have also been blessed by His mercy (34) to which you have been blind, how can we force it upon you despite your aversion to it?

(34) This is the same thing that has been put into the mouth of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in(Ayat 17). That is, At first I recognized the reality of Tauhid by observing keenly the signs of God in the universe and in my own self. Then the same was confirmed by revelation to me. This shows that all the Prophets acquired the knowledge of the Unseen by observation and contemplation. Then Allah blessed them with the actual knowledge of the same at the time of their appointment as Prophets.

وَيٰقَوۡمِ لَاۤ اَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ مَالًا ؕ اِنۡ اَجۡرِىَ اِلَّا عَلَى اللّٰهِ وَمَاۤ اَنَا بِطَارِدِ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا ؕ اِنَّهُمۡ مُّلٰقُوۡا رَبِّهِمۡ وَلٰكِنِّىۡۤ اَرٰٮكُمۡ قَوۡمًا تَجۡهَلُوۡنَ ۲۹

(11-29) My people! I seek no recompense from you. (35) My recompense is only with Allah. Nor will I drive away those who believe. They are destined to meet their Lord. (36) But I find you to be an ignorant people.

(35) This was to bring home to them the fact that he had no selfish motive in the performance of his mission, as if to say: I am conveying the admonition to you without any demand or hope or expectation of worldly gains. Nay, I am bearing all the sufferings in the hope that you may at last realize that I have no axe to grind. And you cannot point out anything to show that I have any personal or selfish interest before me in the mission of the Message. See. (E.N. 70 of Surah Al-Momioon), (E.N. 17 of Surah Saba and (E.N. 41 of Surah Ash-Shura).

(36) That is, their true worth will be known only when they shall meet their Lord. Therefore it is not proper for you to treat them with contempt here in this world. Maybe they are precious

stones, their Lord alone knows, and you are treating them as mere worthless stones. See (Surah Al- Anam, Ayat, 52), (Surah Al-Kahaf, Ayat 28).

وَ يٰقَوۡ مِ مَنۡ يَّ نۡصُرُنِىۡ مِنَ اللّٰهِ اِنۡ طَرَدۡتُّهُمۡ ؕ اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُوۡنَ ﴿۳۰﴾

(11-30) My people! Were I to drive the men of faith away, who will protect me from (the chastisement of) Allah? Do you not understand even this much?

وَ لَاۤ اَقُوۡلُ لَـكُمۡ عِنۡدِىۡ خَزَآئِنُ اللّٰهِ وَ لَاۤ اَعۡلَمُ الۡغَيۡبَ وَ لَاۤ اَقُوۡلُ اِنِّىۡ مَلَكٌ وَّ لَاۤ اَقُوۡلُ لِلَّذِيۡنَ تَزۡدَرِىۡۤ اَعۡيُنُكُمۡ لَنۡ يُّؤۡتِيَهُمُ اللّٰهُ خَيۡرًا ؕ اَللّٰهُ اَعۡلَمُ بِمَا فِىۡۤ اَنۡفُسِهِمۡ ۚ اِنِّىۡۤ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ﴿۳۱﴾

(11-31) I do not say to you that I possess Allah's treasures, nor that I have access to the realm beyond the ken of sense-perception, nor do I claim to be an angel. (37) Nor do I say regarding those whom you look upon with disdain that Allah will not bestow any good upon them. Allah knows best what is in their hearts. Were I to say so I would be one of the wrongdoers.'

(37) This is the answer to their objection that he was no more than a man like themselves. Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) admitted this: In fact I am a man and I never claimed to be more than this. My only claim is that God has shown me the right way of knowledge and action and you are welcome to test this in any way you like. But instead of this, you are asking me questions about the Unseen, though I never claimed to have its knowledge. You ask me to produce such things as can be produced only by that person who possesses God’s treasures and I never claimed to possess them. You object that my physical life is like that of other men, though I never claimed that I was an angel and not a man. The true test of my claim is that you should ask me about the true creeds, the principles of morality and culture and not about frivolous things about the future events for I never claimed to possess their knowledge.

قَالُوۡا يٰنُوۡحُ قَدۡ جٰدَلۡتَنَا فَاَكۡثَرۡتَ جِدَالَنَا فَاۡتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَاۤ اِنۡ كُنۡتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿۳۲﴾

(11-32) They said: 'O Noah! Surely you have disputed with us and have prolonged your dispute. Now bring upon us the chastisement that you threaten us with; do so, if you are truthful.'

قَالَ اِنَّمَا يَاۡتِيۡكُمۡ اللّٰهُ اِنۡ شَآءَ وَمَاۤ اَنۡتُمۡ بِمُعۡجِزِيۡنَ ﴿۳۳﴾

(11-33) Noah said: 'Only Allah will bring it upon you if He so wills, and you will be utterly unable to frustrate that.

وَلَا يَنۡفَعُكُمۡ نُصۡحِىۡۤ اِنۡ اَرَدۡتُّ اَنۡ اَنۡصَحَ لَـكُمۡ اِنۡ كَانَ اللّٰهُ يُرِيۡدُ اَنۡ يُّغۡوِيَكُمۡ ؕ هُوَ رَبُّكُمۡ وَاِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُوۡنَ ﴿۳۴﴾

(11-34) If I want to give you good advice that will not profit you if Allah Himself has decided to let you go astray. (38) He is your Lord, and to Him will you be returned.'

(38) That is, all my efforts to do good to you cannot prove effective, if Allah has decided to withhold the right way from you because of your obduracy in evil and the lack of interest in good ways. For Allah lets people go astray on the way they choose for themselves.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ ۖ قُلْ إِنِ افْتَرَيْتُهُ فَعَلَيَّ إِجْرَامِي وَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(11-35) (O Muhammad!) Do they say that he himself has forged this message? Tell them: 'If I have forged this, the guilt of it will fall upon me, but I am not responsible for the crimes you are committing. (39)

(39) The wording of the verse shows that during the recital of the story of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him), the opponents of the Prophet (peace be upon him) might have felt that he himself had invented that story in order to hit them hard indirectly. So they might have interrupted him, saying: You are inventing such stories as these in order to apply these to us and hit us hard indirectly. That is why the narration of the story has been broken to answer their false accusation.

And the fact is that the mean people always behave like this. As they have no interest in goodness, they would turn to the dark side of everything. Even if one gives them wise counsel or teaches them a useful lesson or warns them of an error, they would never benefit from these nor mend their ways. Instead of this, they would search out for that aspect of the matter which will not only undo the wisdom and goodness of the counsel but also bring an accusation against the admonisher. It is obvious that in this way, even the best of counsels can be made void and ineffective, if the hearer dubs that as a hit and takes it ill as an affront. Moreover, their thinking is always based on suspicion and mistrust. Supposing there is a certain story which appears to be true. A wise man will take it as a fact and learn a lesson from it, even if it applies exactly to his own condition and points out his error. On the contrary, a suspicious and crooked man will at once jump to the conclusion without any proof at all that the story had been invented for the sole purpose of applying it to him in order to hit him hard.

The same was the condition of those who accused the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he himself had forged the story and ascribed it to Allah to make it more effective. Allah has asked

him to say to them: If I have forged the story, I shall have to bear its consequences, but this cannot lessen the punishments of the crimes you are committing for which you alone will be held responsible.

وَ اُوۡحِیَ اِلٰی نُوۡحٍ اَنَّہٗ لَنۡ یُّؤۡمِنَ مِنۡ قَوۡمِکَ اِلَّا مَنۡ قَدۡ اٰمَنَ فَلَا تَبۡتَئِسۡ بِمَا کَانُوۡا یَفۡعَلُوۡنَ ﴿۳۶﴾

(11-36) It was revealed to Noah that no more of your people, other than those who already believe, will ever come to believe. So do not grieve over their deeds,

وَ اصۡنَعِ الۡفُلۡکَ بِاَعۡیُنِنَا وَ وَحۡیِنَا وَ لَا تُخَاطِبۡنِیۡ فِی الَّذِیۡنَ ظَلَمُوۡا ۚ اِنَّہُمۡ مُّغۡرَقُوۡنَ ﴿۳۷﴾

(11-37) and build the Ark under Our eyes and Our direction. And do not supplicate Me concerning those who have engaged in wrong-doing. They are doomed to be drowned. (40)

(40) This verse lays down the limits of the divine law of respite. When the message of a Prophet has been conveyed to a people and is rejected, they are granted respite from punishment only as long as there is the possibility that some of them might accept it. But when there remains no such possibility and there is left nothing but evil element among them, Allah does not grant them any further respite. And this is a manifestation of His mercy, just as for the safety of the good fruit the rotten ones should be thrown away and discarded. Conversely, it shall be an act of cruelty to the good people and the future generations if pity is shown to those wicked people who are incorrigible.

وَيَصۡنَعُ الۡفُلۡكَ ۖ وَكُلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيۡهِ مَلَاٌ مِّنۡ قَوۡمِهٖ سَخِرُوۡا مِنۡهُ ؕ قَالَ اِنۡ تَسۡخَرُوۡا مِنَّا فَاِنَّا
نَسۡخَرُ مِنۡكُمۡ كَمَا تَسۡخَرُوۡنَ ؕ ۳۸

(11-38) As Noah was building the Ark, whenever the leading men of his nation passed by him, they would scoff at him. He said: 'If you scoff at us, we too scoff at you in like manner.

فَسَوۡفَ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ مَنۡ يَّاۡتِيۡهِ عَذَابٌ يُّخۡزِيۡهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيۡهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيۡمٌ ۳۹

(11-39) You will come to know who will be struck by a humiliating chastisement, and who will be subjected to an unceasing torment. (41)

(41) This is a very appropriate example of the points of view of those who look merely at the surface of things and of others who know the reality about them. It appears that when Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) was building the Ark on the land, it looked to be a ridiculous act to those wicked people who did not believe in him. They jeered at him as if to say: Just see the madness of the old man. He wishes to float a ship on the land. For they could never imagine that after a few days, a ship would actually float there. Therefore naturally they regarded that act of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) to be a clear proof of his madness. Probably they might be pointing their fingers at him and the Ark he was constructing, saying to one another: Have you any doubt now, if you had any before, that he is really a mad man, who is constructing a ship to float on the waterless land? But the one, who had the knowledge of the reality and who knew that a ship would actually be needed there in the near future, was laughing at their ignorance and lack of knowledge of the real matter and their arrogant self satisfaction, as if to say: How foolish these people are. The catastrophe is threatening them overhead but they are not only self satisfied but also regard me mad, who has warned them of it and who is himself making preparations to meet it. And these are exactly the two ways, in general, of judging the wisdom or folly of things. One man judges an act to be wise by looking merely at the surface, while the other goes down deep into it and knows it to be foolish. Likewise the former considers an act to be foolish and mad while the latter

who has the real knowledge of the matter, knows that it is based on wisdom and foresight, and is the very same thing that was required under the circumstances.

حَتّٰٓى اِذَا جَآءَ اَمۡرُنَا وَ فَارَ التَّنُّوۡرُ ۙ قُلۡنَا احۡمِلۡ فِيۡهَا مِنۡ كُلٍّ زَوۡجَيۡنِ اثۡنَيۡنِ وَ اَهۡلَكَ اِلَّا مَنۡ سَبَقَ عَلَيۡهِ الۡقَوۡلُ وَ مَنۡ اٰمَنَ ؕ وَ مَاۤ اٰمَنَ مَعَهٗۤ اِلَّا قَلِيۡلٌ ﴿۴۰﴾

(11-40) Thus it was until Our command came to pass and the oven boiled over. (42) We said: 'Take into the Ark a pair of every species; and take your own family except those who have already been declared (as unworthy); (43) and also take everyone who believes. (44) But those who, along with him, had believed were indeed just a few.

(42) Different interpretations have been given of this, but we are of the opinion that the correct one is the one that is based on the plain words of the text. The deluge started from at-tannur, a particular oven from under which water began to boil up. At the same time heavy rain began to fall and springs began to gush up water from many places in the earth. This is given in detail in(Ayats 11-12 of Surah Al- Qamar): We opened the gates of the sky from which it began to rain heavily and constantly, and We tore open the earth and springs began to gush forth water from every side. Thus the two kinds of water gathered together to fulfill the destined doom.

In this connection, it should also be noted that the prefix al (the) before tannur (oven) shows that a particular oven had been specifically marked by God for the purpose of starting the deluge. This began to boil up water as soon as it was commanded to do so, and afterwards it began to be called the oven. It has been explicitly stated in (Ayat 7 of Surah Al- Mamnoon) that the said tannur was specified before hand.

(43) That is, don’t embark in the Ark those who had specifically been marked as unbelievers from your household, for they do not deserve to be shown Our compassion. Most probably they were two persons. One was his son who was drowned (Ayat

43), and the other was his wife. (Surah At-Tahrim, Ayat 10). And if there were any others, they have not been mentioned in the Quran.

(44) Incidentally, this refutes the theory of the historians and genealogists who trace the genealogy of the whole human race to the three sons of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him). This wrong theory became prevalent because of the stories in the Bible that none other than Prophet Noah (peace be upon him), his three sons and his wife were rescued from the deluge. (Genesis 6: 18, 7: 7, 9, and 9: 19). But the Quran contradicts this in many places, saying that besides the people of his own household, some other people of his community, though small in number, were also rescued along with him. Moreover, the Quran declares that the generations which came after Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) were his descendants and of all those people who were rescued in the Ark: You are the descendants of those whom We bore in the Ark with Noah. (Surah Al-Isra, Ayat 3). They were from the descendants of Adam, and from the seed of those whom we carried in the Ark with Noah. (Surah Maryam, Ayat 58).

وَ قَالَ ارۡ كَبُوۡا فِيۡهَا بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ مَجۡرٖىهَا وَ مُرۡسٰٮهَا ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّىۡ لَغَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِيۡمٌ ﴿۴۱﴾

(11-41) Noah said: ' Embark in it. In the name of Allah is its sailing and its anchorage. My Lord is Ever Forgiving, Most Merciful. (45)

(45) This humility shown by Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) that his delivery from the deluge was not due to his own plans, measures and efforts but to the mercy and compassion of his Lord, who is most Forgiving, is the true characteristic of a believer. The servant of God adopts all necessary measures as a man of the world does, but he does not put his trust in those measures alone. Along with these he puts his trust in his Lord for their success, because he knows well that no measure can be adopted without His sanction, nor can it be put into practice nor can it achieve the required object unless it is helped by the compassion and favor of Allah.

وَ هِيَ تَجۡرِيۡ بِهِمۡ فِىۡ مَوۡجٍ كَالۡجِبَالِ وَ نَادٰى نُوۡحُ ا ابۡنَهٗ وَ كَانَ فِىۡ مَعۡزِلٍ يّٰبُنَىَّ ارۡكَبۡ مَّعَنَا وَ لَا تَكُنۡ مَّعَ الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ ۝۴۲

(11-42) The Ark sailed along with them amid mountain-like waves. Noah, spotting his son at a distance, called out to him: 'My son. embark with us. and do not be with the unbelievers.'

قَالَ سَاٰوِىۡۤ اِلٰى جَبَلٍ يَّعۡصِمُنِىۡ مِنَ الۡمَآءِ ؕ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ الۡيَوۡمَ مِنۡ اَمۡرِ اللّٰهِ اِلَّا مَنۡ رَّحِمَ ۚ وَ حَالَ بَيۡنَهُمَا الۡمَوۡجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الۡمُغۡرَقِيۡنَ ۝۴۳

(11-43) The son replied: 'I will go to a mountain for refuge and it will save me from the water.' Noah said: 'None can save anyone today from the command of Allah except those on whom He may have mercy.' Thereupon a wave swept in between the two and he was drowned.

وَ قِيۡلَ يٰۤاَرۡضُ ابۡلَعِىۡ مَآءَكِ وَ يٰسَمَآءُ اَقۡلِعِىۡ وَ غِيۡضَ الۡمَآءُ وَ قُضِىَ الۡاَمۡرُ وَ اسۡتَوَتۡ عَلَى الۡجُوۡدِىِّ وَ قِيۡلَ بُعۡدًا لِّلۡقَوۡمِ الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ۝۴۴

(11-44) And the command was given: 'Earth! Swallow up your water'; and: 'Heaven! Abate!' So the water subsided, the command was fulfilled, and the Ark settled on Mount Judi, (46) and it was said: 'Away with the wrong-doing folk!'

(46) According to the Quran, the Ark rested upon Mount Judi, which is situated to the north-east of Jazirah Ibn Umar in Kurdistan. But according to the Bible its resting place was Mount Ararat in Armenia, which is one of the ranges of mountains of the same name that extends from Armenia to southern Kurdistan. Mount Judi is one of the mountains of the Ararat range, and is known by the same name even today. The ancient histories confirm that the resting place of the Ark was Mount Judi. For instance, Berasus, a religious leader of Babylonia, who lived about 250 years before Christ, says in his history of the Chaldeans that Noah’s Ark rested upon Mount Judi. Abydenus, a pupil of Aristotle, not only confirms the same but also says that many people of Iraq of his time possessed pieces of the Ark, which they ground in water and gave to the sick as a medicine.

Now let us consider the question: Did the deluge mentioned here cover the whole earth or was it confined to that particular region where Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) lived? This is a question which has not been finally settled up to this day. As far as the Bible and the Israelite traditions are concerned, this was universal. (Genesis 7: 18- 24). But the Quran is silent about it, though it does say things which show that the whole human race after the deluge was the descendant of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) and of those with him in the Ark, but this does not mean that the deluge covered all the earth. It may be explained like this: At that time of the history the only region of the earth, which was inhabited by the human race, was the region in which Noah lived, and the generations which came after the deluge, gradually spread over other parts of the earth. This theory is supported by two things. First, there is a conclusive proof that a great flood did come over the land of the Tigris and the Euphrates. This is confirmed by historical traditions, archaeological remains and geological evidence. But there are no such proofs in the other parts of the earth as might show that the deluge was universal. Secondly, traditions have come down to almost all the peoples of the earth living even in distant places like America and Australia, that once a great flood had come all over the earth. The only conclusion which can be drawn from the above is that at one time the forefathers of all the people of the earth lived at one place. But, when afterwards they spread over different lands in the earth; they carried the traditions of the deluge along with them. Refer to (E.N. 47 of Surah Al- Aaraf).

وَ نَادٰی نُوۡحٌ رَّبَّهٗ فَقَالَ رَبِّ اِنَّ ابۡنِیۡ مِنۡ اَهۡلِیۡ وَ اِنَّ وَعۡدَكَ الۡحَقُّ وَ اَنۡتَ اَحۡكَمُ
الۡحٰكِمِیۡنَ ﴿۴۵﴾

(11-45) And Noah called out to his Lord, saying: 'My Lord! My son is of my family. Surely Your promise is true, (47) and You are the greatest of those who judge. (48)

(47) That is, You promised that You will save the members of my family from this calamity; so save my son for he is also a member of my family.

(48) That is, You are the greatest of all rulers: therefore Your decision is final and there can be no appeal against it. And You are the best of all rulers: therefore all Your decisions are based on perfect knowledge and absolute justice.

قَالَ يٰنُوحُ اِنَّهٗ لَيْسَ مِنْ اَهْلِكَ ۚ اِنَّهٗ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ ۫ فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ ۭ اِنِّيْٓ اَعِظُكَ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ ۴۶

(11-46) In response Noah was told: 'Most certainly he is not of your family; verily he is of unrighteous conduct. (49) So do not ask of Me for that concerning which you have no knowledge. I admonish you never to act like the ignorant ones. (50)

(49) Allah has called the wicked son of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him), as “His conduct was other than righteous”, for children are entrusted by the Creator to the care of parents so that they may bring them up and train them to become good persons, and fulfill the purpose for which He created man. If a father does his very best to process and turn the child into a righteous person, but fails in his efforts, the child, who was a sort of raw material in his hands, would be likened to a worthless act. It is obvious that the wicked son was a worthless act, for he was not the sort of good work which his father had desired him to be. So in this sense he did not belong to the family of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him), whom the Creator had sent to mold all his people into good acts, especially those who were of his own flesh and blood. Thus that unrighteous son had forfeited all the rights of blood he had with the Prophet as far as the torment of the deluge was concerned.

Now let us consider the other question: Why was not the request of the Prophet regarding his own flesh and blood granted? The answer is this: If any part of the body of a man becomes so rotten that the surgeon is of the definite opinion that that part must be cut off for the sake of the safety of the rest of the body, the surgeon will not comply with the request of the man not to cut that part of his body, but will say: It is not a part of your body because it is rotten. This will not, however, mean that it was never actually a part of the body but will imply only this: As it has

ceased to function rightly as a part of the body, it is no more a part of the body in the sense and for the purpose the healthy parts of the body are its parts. Likewise, when it was said to Prophet Noah (peace be upon him): He is not of your family, it did not negate the fact that he was from his loins but implied: He does not deserve to be treated as a member of your righteous family because of his spoiled morals and conduct. As the torment of the deluge has been brought about to punish those who had sided with the unbelievers in the conflict of kufr and faith, your son does not deserve to be rescued from it along with the believers. Had it been a conflict between your descendants and those of the unbelievers, the result would have been different, but this being a conflict between the righteous and the unrighteous, the former alone will be delivered from it.

The epithet, a worthless act, has been purposely applied to the son of Noah, for it is very meaningful. It points to the two different objects that the parents have in view in bringing up their children. Those parents who look merely at the surface of things, bring up and love their children because they are from their loins or their wombs, irrespective of the fact whether they are righteous or unrighteous. But this epithet requires the believers to look upon their children as pieces of work entrusted to them in a natural way by their Creator, so that they should prepare and mold them so as to fulfill the object for which Allah has created man. Therefore, if a certain parent fails in his efforts to mold his child in a way to fulfill the very object for which the child was entrusted to him and the latter becomes a servant of Satan instead of his Lord, the parent should regard all his efforts for the child to have gone utterly waste. In that case there is no reason why that parent should have any consideration for that worthless act.

As a corollary to the above, the same rule will apply to the other relationships of a believer. As a believer is one who believes in certain creeds and behaviors, all his relationships with the other people will be determined by those creeds and behaviors. If his blood relations have the qualities of a believer, their relationship with him becomes doubly stronger. But if they

are void of the qualities of a believer; the believer will confine his relationship with them only to the extent of blood relationships and will have no spiritual relationship with them. Consequently, if such a relative comes face to face with the believer in the conflict between kufr and the faith, the believer should fight with him just as he would with any other unbeliever.

(50) This warning from his Lord does not mean that Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) was suffering from the lack of faith or that his faith had any tinge of weakness or that he had beliefs like those of the ignorant people. His response to this is rather a proof of his high moral character. As Noah was like the other Prophets, a human being, he also suffered from the common human weakness, that is, natural parental love for children. So he begged his Lord to deliver his son from the deluge. Allah admonished him because the high character of a Prophet demanded that he ought not to have made such a request even for his own flesh and blood. That is why no sooner was the warning administered to him than he realized that he had come down from the high position of a Prophet to the level of a mere father because of the critical psychological human weakness. Therefore immediately after the warning, he repented of his weakness, and behaved as if his own son had not been drowned in the deluge a moment before this. This character shown by him is a clear proof that he was a true Prophet. He returned to the same height and meekly asked his Lord’s forgiveness for showing any concern for his own son who had forsaken the truth and sided with falsehood.

قَالَ رَبِّ اِنِّیۡۤ اَعُوۡذُ بِکَ اَنۡ اَسۡـَٔلَکَ مَا لَیۡسَ لِیۡ بِہٖ عِلۡمٌ ؕ وَ اِلَّا تَغۡفِرۡ لِیۡ وَ تَرۡحَمۡنِیۡۤ اَکُنۡ مِّنَ الۡخٰسِرِیۡنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

(11-47) Noah said: 'My Lord! I take refuge with You that I should ask you for that concerning which I have no knowledge. And if You do not forgive me and do not show mercy to me, I shall be among the losers. (51)

(51) The Quran has cited the story of the drowning of the son of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) to bring home to the people that Allah’s decrees are absolutely just and final.

This also served as a warning to the Quraish who considered themselves to be immune from the torment of Allah simply because they were the descendants of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), and had several gods and goddesses as their intercederers. Likewise it was a warning to the Jews and the Christians who cherished, and still cherish, such beliefs, nay, even to those Muslims, who foolishly believe that their saintly ancestors and holy people will guard them against the consequences of the justice of Allah. For the tragic scene depicted here categorically refutes such false expectations and beliefs, saying: O foolish people! Why do you cherish such false hopes? When Our Prophet Noah could not save his son who was drowned before his very eyes, and his prayer for the son was not only rejected but he was rebuked for making such a prayer, how can you then expect that anyone much less than a Prophet can deliver you from the justice of Allah?

قِيۡلَ يٰنُوۡحُ اهۡبِطۡ بِسَلٰمٍ مِّنَّا وَ بَرَكٰتٍ عَلَيۡكَ وَ عَلٰٓى اُمَمٍ مِّمَّنۡ مَّعَكَ ؕ وَ اُمَمٌ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمۡ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُمۡ مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ ۴۸

(11-48) It was said: 'Noah! Disembark, (52) with Our peace, and with blessings upon you and upon those who are with you. There are also people whom We shall allow to enjoy themselves for a while, and then a painful chastisement from Us shall afflict them.'

(52) That is, go down from the Mountain on which the Ark is resting.

تِلۡكَ مِنۡ اَنۡۢبَآءِ الۡغَيۡبِ نُوۡحِيۡهَاۤ اِلَيۡكَ ۚ مَا كُنۡتَ تَعۡلَمُهَاۤ اَنۡتَ وَ لَا قَوۡمُكَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِ هٰذَا ۛؕ فَاصۡبِرۡ ؕ اِنَّ الۡعَاقِبَةَ لِلۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ۴۹

(11-49) We reveal to you these accounts of matters that are beyond the reach of human perception. Neither you nor your people knew about them before this. Be, then, patient. Surely, the good end is for the God-fearing. (53)

(53) That is, you and your companions will come out successful at the end of the conflict just as Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) and his companions did. For this is the divine law that those who exert for the right cause, avoiding erroneous ways for fear of Allah, should come out successful in the end, even though they should meet with failures in the beginning of the conflict at the hands of the enemies of the truth. Therefore you should patiently bear the afflictions which you are suffering and stand steadfast against the obstacles you are encountering in the way, and you should not be in the least disheartened by the painful and superficial successes of your enemies. If you practice fortitude, you will come out successful in the end like Noah and his companions.

وَ اِلٰی عَادٍ اَخَاهُمۡ هُوۡدًا ؕ قَالَ یٰقَوۡمِ اعۡبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَکُمۡ مِّنۡ اِلٰهٍ غَیۡرُهٗ ؕ اِنۡ اَنۡتُمۡ اِلَّا مُفۡتَرُوۡنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

(11-50) And to 'Ad We sent their brother Hud. (54) He said: 'My people! Serve Allah: you have no god save Him. (In attributing partners to Allah) you have merely been fabricating lies. (55)

(54) Please keep in view (E.Ns 51-56 of Surah Al-Araf).

(55) That is, you have forged falsehood about all the deities you worship beside Allah, for in fact they possess no powers and no qualities that might entitle them to Godhead. As they have absolutely nothing in them which might make them the objects of worship and service, you have put in them false hopes that they would fulfill your desires and needs.

یٰقَوۡمِ لَاۤ اَسۡـَٔلُکُمۡ عَلَیۡهِ اَجۡرًا ؕ اِنۡ اَجۡرِیَ اِلَّا عَلَی الَّذِیۡ فَطَرَنِیۡ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُوۡنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

(11-51) My people! I seek no reward from you for my work. My reward lies only with Him Who created me. Do you not understand anything? (56)

(56) This concise sentence contains a very strong argument: The fact that you are taking a superficial view of my Message and rejecting it without paying due and deep consideration to it is a clear proof that you are not using your common sense. Had you tried to understand the matter, you would have found much material for your consideration. You would have noticed that I have absolutely no personal interests: nay, I am suffering hardships, in conveying the message which cannot bring any benefit to me or to the members of my family. This is a conclusive proof that my faith has very sound bases which are strong enough to enable me to forsake all the worldly joys and comforts and encounter the enmity of the whole world by waging a war against the centuries old, established rites, customs and ways of life. Do these things not demand a deep and serious consideration? Why

don’t you then use your common sense before rejecting the message outright?

وَ یٰقَوۡمِ اسۡتَغۡفِرُوۡا رَبَّکُمۡ ثُمَّ تُوۡبُوۡۤا اِلَیۡہِ یُرۡسِلِ السَّمَآءَ عَلَیۡکُمۡ مِّدۡرَارًا وَّ یَزِدۡکُمۡ قُوَّۃً اِلٰی قُوَّتِکُمۡ وَ لَا تَتَوَلَّوۡا مُجۡرِمِیۡنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

(11-52) My people! Ask your Lord for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance. He will shower abundant rains upon you from the heaven, and will add strength to your strength. (57) Do not turn away as those given to guilt.'

(57) This is the same thing that has been stated by the tounge of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in (Ayat 3). This is a clear proof that moral values count not only in the life of the Hereafter but also determine the rise and fall of nations in this world. This is because Allah rules over the world in accordance with moral principles and not on the basis of His physical laws alone. That is why Allah has declared in many places in the Quran that the fate of a community hangs on the message which He sends to it through His Prophet. If it accepts the message, He opens the gates of His favors and blessings for it, but if it rejects the message, then it is destroyed.

In short, this verse is an article of the moral law in accordance with which Allah deals with man. Conversely, the other article of the same principle of the law is that the community which, deluded by its worldly prosperity, begins to tread the paths of sin and iniquity is ultimately destroyed. But if, during its headlong race towards its doom, it realizes its erroneous behavior and gives up its disobedience and turns in repentance towards Allah, its evil fate is changed and the impending scourge is averted and it is given a further term of respite along with blessings and favors.

قَالُوۡا یٰہُوۡدُ مَا جِئۡتَنَا بِبَیِّنَۃٍ وَّ مَا نَحۡنُ بِتَارِکِیۡۤ اٰلِہَتِنَا عَنۡ قَوۡلِکَ وَ مَا نَحۡنُ لَکَ بِمُؤۡمِنِیۡنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

(11-53) They said: 'O Hud! You have not brought to us any clear evidence, [58] and we are not going to forsake our gods merely because you say so. We are not going to believe you.

(58) That is, you have not brought a clear sign as evidence to prove conclusively to us that you have been sent by Allah and that the message you are presenting before us is the truth.

إِن نَّقُولُ إِلَّا اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ آلِهَتِنَا بِسُوءٍ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي أُشْهِدُ اللَّهَ وَاشْهَدُوا أَنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

(11-54) All we can say is that some god of ours has afflicted you with evil. [59] .Hud said: 'Indeed I take Allah as my witness, [60] and you too to be my witnesses that I have nothing to do [61] with your associating with Allah

(59) That is, it appears that you had behaved rudely towards a god or goddess or saint: Consequently you have been smitten with madness and are being abused, dishonored and pelted with stones in the same streets in which you were respected and honored before this.

(60) This was the refutation of their charge that he had not brought any clear evidence to them. It implied: You say that I have brought no evidence to prove that I have been sent by Allah who is a standing witness everywhere in His universe and giving evidence with the phenomena of nature to show that the truth I have stated before you is absolutely correct. This also proves conclusively that there is no sign of truth in what you falsely ascribe to your gods.

(61) This is the answer of Prophet Hud (peace be upon him) to their assertion: We are not going to give up our gods at your word. (Ayat 53). His reply implied: Note it well that I, too, feel a strong disgust at the gods you have set up beside Allah.

مِن دُونِهِ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿٥٥﴾

(11-55) others than Him in His divinity. So conspire against me, all of you, and give me no respite. (62)

(62) This is his answer to their threat: “Some of our gods have smitten you with some evil” Compare this with (Surah Younus, Ayat 71).

اِنِّیۡ تَوَکَّلۡتُ عَلَی اللّٰہِ رَبِّیۡ وَ رَبِّکُمۡ ؕ مَا مِنۡ دَآبَّۃٍ اِلَّا ہُوَ اٰخِذٌۢ بِنَاصِیَتِہَا ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّیۡ عَلٰی صِرَاطٍ مُّسۡتَقِیۡمٍ ﴿۵۶﴾

(11-56) I have put my trust in Allah, Who is my Lord and your Lord. There is no moving creature which He does not hold by its forelock. Surely, My Lord is on the straight path. (63)

(63) That is, whatever my Lord does is always right and correct for all His ways are straight and just, and the judgments He passes are based entirely on truth and justice. Therefore you cannot come out successful in your conflict with me: for you have deviated from the right way and are committing wicked deeds, while I am on the right way.

فَاِنۡ تَوَلَّوۡا فَقَدۡ اَبۡلَغۡتُكُمۡ مَّاۤ اُرۡسِلۡتُ بِهٖۤ اِلَيۡكُمۡ ؕ وَيَسۡتَخۡلِفُ رَبِّىۡ قَوۡمًا غَيۡرَكُمۡ وَلَا تَضُرُّوۡنَهٗ شَيۡـًٔا ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّىۡ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ حَفِيۡظٌ ۝٥٧

(11-57) If you, then, turn away (from the truth), know that I have delivered the message with which I was sent to you. Now my Lord will set up another people in place of you and you shall in no way be able to harm Him. (64) Surely my Lord keeps a watch over everything.'

(64) This is his answer to their obdurate denial: “Nor will we believe in you.”

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمۡرُنَا نَجَّيۡنَا هُوۡدًا وَّالَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مَعَهٗ بِرَحۡمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَنَجَّيۡنٰهُمۡ مِّنۡ عَذَابٍ غَلِيۡظٍ ۝٥٨

(11-58) And when Our command came to pass, We delivered Hud, together with those who shared his faith, out of special mercy from Us. We delivered them from a woeful chastisement.

وَتِلۡكَ عَادٌ ؕ جَحَدُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمۡ وَعَصَوۡا رُسُلَهٗ وَاتَّبَعُوۡۤا اَمۡرَ كُلِّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيۡدٍ ۝٥٩

(11-59) Such were 'Ad. They repudiated the signs of their Lord, disobeyed His Messengers, (65) and followed the bidding of every tyrannical enemy of the truth.

(65) Though only one Messenger had come to them, he had presented the same message that had been presented by every Messenger in every age to every community. Therefore disobedience to one Messenger has been declared to be disobedience to all the Messengers.

وَ اُتۡبِعُوۡا فِیۡ هٰذِهِ الدُّنۡیَا لَعۡنَةً وَّ یَوۡمَ الۡقِیٰمَةِ ؕ اَلَاۤ اِنَّ عَادًا کَفَرُوۡا رَبَّهُمۡ ؕ اَلَا بُعۡدًا لِّعَادٍ قَوۡمِ هُوۡدٍ ﴿۶۰﴾

(11-60) They were pursued by a curse in this world, and so will they be on the Day of Judgement .Lo! 'Ad disbelieved in the Lord. Lo! ruined are 'Ad, the people of Hud.

وَ اِلٰی ثَمُوۡدَ اَخَاهُمۡ صٰلِحًا ؕ قَالَ یٰقَوۡمِ اعۡبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَکُمۡ مِّنۡ اِلٰهٍ غَیۡرُهٗ ؕ هُوَ اَنۡشَاَکُمۡ مِّنَ الۡاَرۡضِ وَ اسۡتَعۡمَرَکُمۡ فِیۡهَا فَاسۡتَغۡفِرُوۡهُ ثُمَّ تُوۡبُوۡۤا اِلَیۡهِ ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّیۡ قَرِیۡبٌ مُّجِیۡبٌ ﴿۶۱﴾

(11-61) And to Thamud We sent their brother Salih. (66) He said: 'My people! Serve Allah; you have no god other than Him. He brought you into being out of the earth, and has made you dwell in it. (67) So ask Him to forgive you, and do turn towards Him in repentance. (68) Indeed My Lord is near, responsive to prayers . (69)

(66) Please keep in view (E.Ns 57-62 of Surah Al-Araf).

(67) This is the proof of the claim: “You have no other Deity than Allah” .The argument is based on the fact which the mushriks themselves acknowledged that it is Allah Who is their Creator. Therefore Prophet Salih (peace be upon him) argued like this: You yourselves acknowledge that it is Allah Who has created your wonderful human body out of the lifeless particles of the earth and that it is Allah Who has made the earth a suitable place for you to live. How can then there be any Deity other than Allah Who may be worthy of Godhead, service and worship?

(68) That is, so ask His forgiveness for the sin you have been committing by worshiping others.

(69) In this concise sentence, the Quran has refuted a grave misunderstanding of the mushriks, which has in every age misled people into wrong creeds. They presumed that Allah lived far away from them and, therefore, was unapproachable like their own rulers on the earth. As the only way of approach to them was an intercessor who alone could receive and present their requests and applications to their rulers, and convey their answers to

them, they presumed that there should be some intercessor to help approach Allah and bring to them the answers to their prayers. Obviously this is a false presumption, which has been endorsed and encouraged by clever people that Allah is out of the reach of common people and it is not possible for them to reach Him and present their prayers and get their answers. So they should search for such sacred beings as may have an approach to Him. Accordingly, they tried to secure the services of those who were well versed in the art of conveying the requests with the necessary presents and gifts to the Highest Authority. This misunderstanding created hosts of intercessors, and the establishment of the system of priesthood, which has so incapacitated the followers of mushrik creeds of ignorance that they cannot perform by themselves any religious ceremony from birth to death.

Now let us consider the concise answer of Prophet Salih (peace be upon him), by which he broke asunder the false presumption of the mushriks. It is this: Allah is near at hand, so you can invoke His help directly without the help of any interceder. He answers prayers, so you can yourselves receive the answer to your prayer. Though He is the Highest, each one of you will find Him so near to yourself that you will be able to convey your request even in a whisper, nay, you are permitted to convey your requests openly or secretly to Him. Therefore give up the folly of seeking interceders and setting them up as His partners, and address your prayers to Him Who is near at hand and answers prayers. (Refer also to (E.N. 188 of Surah Al-Baqarah).

قَالُوۡا یٰصٰلِحُ قَدۡ کُنۡتَ فِیۡنَا مَرۡجُوًّا قَبۡلَ ہٰذَا ۟ اَتَنۡہٰنَاۤ اَنۡ نَّعۡبُدَ مَا یَعۡبُدُ اٰبَآؤُنَا ؕ وَ اِنَّنَا لَفِیۡ شَکٍّ مِّمَّا تَدۡعُوۡنَاۤ اِلَیۡہِ مُرِیۡبٍ ﴿۶۲﴾

(11-62) They said: 'O Salih! Until now you were one of those among us on whom we placed great hopes. (70) Now, would you forbid us to worship what our forefathers were wont to worship? (71) Indeed we are in disquieting doubt about what you are calling us to. (72)

(70) That is, we had expected that by your wisdom, intelligence, foresight, serious behavior and dignified personality, you would become a great and prosperous man. So we had looked forward to the great success you would achieve and to the manifold advantages we would gain over other clans and tribes because of you. But you have brought to naught all of our hopes by adopting the way based on Tauhid and the Hereafter which is bound to lead us to utter ruin.

It may be noted here that the people of Muhammad (peace be upon him) have had the same great expectations of him. They, too, had a very high opinion of his abilities and capabilities before his appointment as a Prophet. For they expected that he would become a great leader, and his foresight would bring innumerable benefits to them also. But when, contrary to their expectations, he began to invite them to the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter, and preach the principles of high morality, they lost not only all hope in him, but began to entertain and express quite the reverse views. They said: What a pity, this man who was quite good till now has, under the influence of some charm, not only ruined his own career but has destroyed all of our hopes as well.

(71) That was their argument for the worship of their gods. They said that they would worship them because their forefathers worshiped them. Prophet Salih (peace be upon him), argued like this: Worship Allah....Who has created you from the earth, and Who made it a living place for you. In answer to this they argued, as if to say: These deities are also worthy of worship, and we will not give them up because our forefathers have been worshiping them for a long time. This is an apt example of the type of arguments employed by the supporters of Islam and those of ignorance. The former base their arguments on sound reasoning, while the latter base them on blind imitation.

(72) The Quran has not specified the nature of the doubts and feelings of distraction. This is because, though all of them had these feelings, these were different in different persons. For it is one of the characteristics of the message that it takes away the

peace of mind of all these people to whom it is addressed. Though the feelings of distraction are of various kinds, everyone gets a portion of them. This is because it becomes simply impossible for anyone to continue treading the paths of deviation with that peace of mind which one had before the coming of the message. For it impels everyone to think whether one is following the right way or any of the wrong ways of ignorance. No one can shut one's ears and eyes against the penetrating and merciless criticism of the weaknesses of the ways of ignorance, and the strong and rational arguments for the right way. Then the high moral character of the Messenger, his perseverance, his nobility, his gentle conduct, his frank and righteous attitude and his dignity cannot fail to shake their impressions even on the most obdurate, and prejudiced opponents. The message by itself attracts the best elements from that society and brings about the most revolutionary changes in the characters of its followers so as to make them models of excellence. Naturally all these things combine to produce the feelings of distraction in the minds of those who desire to uphold the ways of ignorance even after the coming of the truth.

قَالَ يٰقَوۡمِ اَرَءَيۡتُمۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنۡ رَّبِّىۡ وَ اٰتٰىنِىۡ مِنۡهُ رَحۡمَةً فَمَنۡ يَّنۡصُرُنِىۡ مِنَ اللّٰهِ اِنۡ عَصَيۡتُهٗ فَمَا تَزِيۡدُوۡنَنِىۡ غَيۡرَ تَخۡسِيۡرٍ ۶۳

(11-63) Salih said: 'My people! What do you think? If I had a clear evidence from my Lord, and then He also bestowed His mercy upon me, who will rescue me from the punishment of Allah if I still disobey Him? You can only make me lose even more.
(73)

(73) This is the answer to the preceding question: If I disobey Allah by discarding the guidance I have received from Him in order to please you, you cannot defend me against Him. You will rather add to the intensity of my guilt of disobedience to Him. Thus I shall incur additional punishment from Him for misleading you instead of showing the right way for which I had been sent to you.

وَ يٰقَوۡمِ هٰذِهٖ نَاقَةُ اللّٰهِ لَكُمۡ اٰيَةً فَذَرُوۡهَا تَاۡكُلۡ فِىۡۤ اَرۡضِ اللّٰهِ وَ لَا تَمَسُّوۡهَا بِسُوۡٓءٍ فَيَاۡخُذَكُمۡ عَذَابٌ قَرِيۡبٌ ۶۴

(11-64) My people! This she-camel of Allah is a sign for you. So let her pasture on Allah's earth, and do not hurt her or else some chastisement - which is near at hand -should overtake you.'

فَعَقَرُوۡهَا فَقَالَ تَمَتَّعُوۡا فِىۡ دَارِكُمۡ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ وَعۡدٌ غَيۡرُ مَكۡذُوۡبٍ ۝۶۵

(11-65) But they slaughtered her. Thereupon Salih warned them: 'Enjoy yourselves in your homes for a maximum of three days. This is a promise which shall not be belied.'

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمۡرُنَا نَجَّيۡنَا صٰلِحًا وَّالَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مَعَهٗ بِرَحۡمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَمِنۡ خِزۡىِ يَوۡمِئِذٍ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الۡقَوِىُّ الۡعَزِيۡزُ ۝۶۶

(11-66) Then, when Our command came to pass, We saved Salih and those who shared his faith through Our special mercy, from the disgrace of that day. (74) Truly Your Lord is All-Strong, All-Mighty.

(74) According to the traditions that are current in the Sinai Peninsula, Allah delivered them from the torment and led them there. There is a Mount near Jabal-i-Musa, known by the name of Prophet Salih where, it is said, the Prophet took refuge after the destruction of his people.

وَاَخَذَ الَّذِيۡنَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيۡحَةُ فَاَصۡبَحُوۡا فِىۡ دِيَارِهِمۡ جٰثِمِيۡنَ ۝۶۷

(11-67) And the Blast overtook those who were wont to do wrong, and then they lay lifeless in their homes

كَاَنۡ لَّمۡ يَغۡنَوۡا فِيۡهَا ؕ اَلَا اِنَّ ثَمُوۡدَا كَفَرُوۡا رَبَّهُمۡ ؕ اَلَا بُعۡدًا لِّثَمُوۡدَ ۝۶۸

(11-68) as though they had never lived there before. Oh, verily the Thamud denied their Lord! Oh, the Thamud were destroyed.

وَ لَقَدۡ جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَاۤ اِبۡرٰهِيۡمَ بِالۡبُشۡرٰى قَالُوۡا سَلٰمًا ؕ قَالَ سَلٰمٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ اَنۡ جَآءَ بِعِجۡلٍ حَنِيۡذٍ ﴿۶۹﴾

(11-69) Indeed Our messengers came to Abraham, bearing glad tidings. They greeted him with 'peace', and Abraham answered back to them 'peace', and hurriedly brought to them a roasted calf. (75)

(75) This shows that the angels had come to Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) in the form of human beings and had not disclosed their identity. Therefore he took them for strangers and brought a roasted calf for their entertainment.

فَلَمَّا رَآٰ اَيۡدِيَهُمۡ لَا تَصِلُ اِلَيۡهِ نَكِرَهُمۡ وَ اَوۡجَسَ مِنۡهُمۡ خِيۡفَةً ؕ قَالُوۡا لَا تَخَفۡ اِنَّاۤ اُرۡسِلۡنَاۤ اِلٰى
قَوۡمِ لُوۡطٍ ؕ ۷۰

(11-70) When he perceived that their hands could not reach it, he mistrusted them, and felt afraid of them. (76) They said: 'Do not be afraid. We have been sent to the people of Lot. (77)

(76) Some commentators are of the view that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) was afraid of them because of their refusal to eat his meal. He had concluded that they had come to him with some evil intention. For, according to the Arab tradition, if some strangers refused hospitality, it meant that they had not come as guests but as enemies to plunder. But this view is not supported by the succeeding verse.

(77) The wording of their answer shows that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) had understood from their refusal to eat that they were angels. But he was afraid of their visit because he knew that the coming of the angels in the human shape did not bode well: So he was fearful that they might have come to take them to task for some offense committed by the people of his household or of his habitation or by himself. Had it been the same thing that the commentators presumed, then their answer should have been, “Don’t fear us for we are angels from your Lord.” But the answer they gave to remove his fear, “Don’t have any fear for we have been sent to the people of Lot (and not to you),” shows that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) knew that they were angels but was troubled in his mind as to the reason of their visit in the human form. This was because the angels came in human form when some one was either to be put to a hard trial or punished severely for some offense.

وَ امۡرَاَتُهٗ قَآئِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتۡ فَبَشَّرۡنٰهَا بِاِسۡحٰقَ وَ مِنۡ وَّرَآءِ اِسۡحٰقَ يَعۡقُوۡبَ ﴿۷۱﴾

(11-71) And Abraham's wife was standing by and on hearing this she laughed. (78) And We gave her the good news of (the birth of) Isaac, and after Isaac, of Jacob. (79)

(78) It appears from this that the news of the visit of the angels in the human form had made the people of the house uneasy. So Prophet Abraham’s Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) wife had also come there to know what the matter was. She laughed with joy when she learned that the angels were sent not to punish their people but the people of Lot (peace be upon him).

(79) The angels told the good news of a son to Sarah instead of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) because he already had a son, Ismail from Hajirah but had no child from her. Therefore to remove her sorrow they told her the good news that a son, Isaac, will be born to her, who will have a son, Jacob, both of whom will be great Messengers of Allah.

قَالَتۡ يٰوَيۡلَتٰٓى ءَاَلِدُ وَ اَنَا عَجُوۡزٌ وَّ هٰذَا بَعۡلِىۡ شَيۡخًا ؕ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَشَىۡءٌ عَجِيۡبٌ ﴿۷۲﴾

(11-72) She said: 'Woe is me! (80) Shall I bear a child now that I am an old woman and my husband is well advanced in years. (81) This is indeed strange!'

(80) These words were not used by her in their literal sense as an exclamation of grief and lamentation. She uttered these words merely to express surprise at the news.

(81) According to the Bible Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) was 100 years old at the time and Sarah was 90 years.

قَالُوۡۤا اَتَعۡجَبِيۡنَ مِنۡ اَمۡرِ اللّٰهِ ؕ رَحۡمَتُ اللّٰهِ وَ بَرَكٰتُهٗ عَلَيۡكُمۡ اَهۡلَ الۡبَيۡتِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ حَمِيۡدٌ مَّجِيۡدٌ ﴿۷۳﴾

(11-73) They said: 'Do you wonder at Allah's decree? (82) Allah's mercy and His blessings be upon you, O people of the house. Surely, He is Praiseworthy, Glorious.'

(82) The question was posed to her to remind her that though people of old age do not bear children, it is not beyond Allah's power to bring this about. Therefore a true believer like her should not show any surprise at the good news when it is conveyed to her from Allah.

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنْ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ الرَّوْعُ وَجَآءَتْهُ الْبُشْرٰى يُجَادِلُنَا فِيْ قَوْمِ لُوْطٍ ۝٧٤

(11-74) Thus when fear had left Abraham and the good news had been conveyed to him, he began to dispute with Us concerning the people of Lot. (83)

(83) "He began to argue with Us" is the expression of affection and endearment which manifests the nature of close relationship of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) with his Lord. This helps depict the picture of the argument that the servant had with his Lord for pleading the case of the people of Lot. He pleaded persistently: Lord, avert the coming scourge from the people of Lot. The Lord replied: These people have become so degraded that no good was left in them and their crimes have become so heinous that they deserve no leniency at all. But the servant still persisted: Lord, give them more respite, even if a little good yet remains in them; maybe it should bear some fruit. This dispute has been recorded in the Bible rather in detail, but the concise mention in the Quran is more meaningful. (For comparison please refer to Genesis 18: 23-32).

اِنَّ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ لَحَلِيْمٌ اَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيْبٌ ۝٧٥

(11-75) Surely Abraham was forbearing, tenderhearted and oft-turning to Allah.

يٰٓاِبْرٰهِيْمُ اَعْرِضْ عَنْ هٰذَا اِنَّهٗ قَدْ جَآءَ اَمْرُ رَبِّكَ وَاِنَّهُمْ اٰتِيْهِمْ عَذَابٌ غَيْرُ مَرْدُوْدٍ ۝٧٦

(11-76) Thereupon (Our angels) said to him: 'O Abraham! Desist from this, for indeed your Lord's command has come; and a chastisement which cannot be averted (84) is about to befall them.'

(84) A superficial view of this incident from the life of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) in the context it occurs might lead one to consider it to be irrelevant, especially as an introduction to the coming scourge on the people of Lot. But if one reviews this in the light of the object for which these historical events have been related here, one will come to the conclusion that its mention is most apt here. In order to understand its relevancy we should keep in view the following two things:

(1) These historical events have been related here to warn the Quraish that they were absolutely wrong in their selfdelusion that they were quite immune from the scourge with which the Quran was threatening them because of their relationship with Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and their guardianship of the Kabah and their religious, economic and political leadership of Arabia. They thought that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), whose descendants they were, was a beloved servant of Allah and would, therefore, intercede for them and defend them against any scourge from Him. That is why the graphic picture of the death of Prophet Noah's (peace be upon him) son has been drawn to show that the prayer of a great Prophet like him could not save his own son from the scourge. Not only was his prayer rejected but he was also taken to task for making a request for his wicked son. Then this second incident from the life of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) has been related to show that, though Allah was very kind to him, He rejected his appeal for the people of Lot because he had tried to intercede for the wicked people, which was against the requirements of justice.

(2) This incident from the life of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) has been related along with, the destruction of the people of Lot for another object as well. The Quraish had forgotten that the law of divine justice had always been operating continuously and regularly and there were open proofs of this all around them. On the one hand, there was the case of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). He had to leave his home for the sake of the truth and righteousness and to live in a foreign country where, to all appearances, he had no outward power to

support him. But divine justice rewarded him for his righteousness with a son like Isaac and a grandson like Jacob (peace be upon them) whose descendants, the Israelites, reigned supreme for centuries over the same Palestine where he had taken refuge as a stranger. On the other hand, there were the people of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) who were living nearby in great prosperity, which had intoxicated them so much that they lived in open wickedness, totally forgetting that they would be overtaken by retribution from Allah. So much so that they scoffed at the admonition of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him). But divine justice came into operation at the same time, when it was conveying the good news to Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and decreed that those wicked people should be annihilated from the face of the earth. As a result of this, no vestige of their habitations was left on the surface of the earth. This fact should serve as a lesson to the wicked people for all times.

وَ لَمَّا جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَا لُوۡطًا سِیۡٓءَ بِہِمۡ وَ ضَاقَ بِہِمۡ ذَرۡعًا وَّ قَالَ ہٰذَا یَوۡمٌ عَصِیۡبٌ ﴿۷۷﴾

(11-77) And when Our messengers came to Lot, (85) he was perturbed by their coming and felt troubled on their account, and said: 'This is a distressing day. (86)

(85) Please keep in view (E.Ns 63-68 of Surah Al-Aaraf).

(86) From the tenor of the details of the story as given in the different parts of the Quran, it becomes quite clear that the angels came to Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) in the form of handsome boys and that he was unaware that they were angels. He was troubled and distressed in his mind, for he knew how wicked and shameless his people were.

وَ جَآءَہٗ قَوۡمُہٗ یُہۡرَعُوۡنَ اِلَیۡہِ ؕ وَ مِنۡ قَبۡلُ کَانُوۡا یَعۡمَلُوۡنَ السَّیِّاٰتِ ؕ قَالَ یٰقَوۡمِ ہٰۤؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِیۡ ہُنَّ اَطۡہَرُ لَکُمۡ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰہَ وَ لَا تُخۡزُوۡنِ فِیۡ ضَیۡفِیۡ ؕ اَلَیۡسَ مِنۡکُمۡ رَجُلٌ رَّشِیۡدٌ ﴿۷۸﴾

(11-78) And his people came to him rushing. Before this they were wont to commit evil deeds. Lot said: 'My people! Here are my daughters; they are purer for you. (87) Have fear of Allah

and do not disgrace me concerning my guests. Is there not even one right-minded person in your midst?'

(87) By “My daughters”, Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) might have meant either of the two things. He might have referred to the daughters of the community as “my daughters” because the relationship of a Prophet to his people is as of a father to his children. But it is also possible that he aught have meant by this his own daughters. Anyhow, this could not have been an offer of adultery, for the succeeding sentence “they are purer for you” leaves no room for such a misunderstanding. This makes it quite obvious that Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) admonished them in this way so as to turn them to the females for the lawful gratification of their sexual desires instead of seeking unnatural ways.

قَالُوۡا لَقَدۡ عَلِمۡتَ مَا لَنَا فِىۡ بَنٰتِكَ مِنۡ حَقٍّ وَ اِنَّكَ لَتَعۡلَمُ مَا نُرِيۡدُ ۝٧٩

(11-79) They said: 'Surely you already know that we have nothing to do with your daughters. (88) You also know well what we want.'

(88) This answer of the people of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) shows that they had gone to the lowest depth of depravity and openly and brazen facedly declared that they did not want females but males. This was the proof that they had not only left the natural way of purity and strayed into the unnatural way of impurity but had also lost all interest in the natural way of gratification. Such a depraved condition is the worst form of moral degradation, for it shows that no good has been left at all. Supposing a person has fallen as a victim to an unlawful and sinful behavior, but at the same time considers it to be a wrong behavior which should be avoided, there is hope for the reform of such a person, and even if he does not mend his way the utmost that can be said about him is that he is a depraved person. On the other hand, if a person gives himself wholly to the unlawful because he has no interest in the lawful, such a filthy person is not worthy of being considered a man at all, and therefore should

be wiped out of the earth. That is why Allah decreed that the people of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) should be completely annihilated from the face of the earth.

قَالَ لَوۡ اَنَّ لِیۡ بِکُمۡ قُوَّۃً اَوۡ اٰوِیۡۤ اِلٰی رُکۡنٍ شَدِیۡدٍ ﴿۸۰﴾

(11-80) He said: 'Would that I had the strength to set you straight, or could seek refuge in some powerful support.'

قَالُوۡا یٰلُوۡطُ اِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّکَ لَنۡ یَّصِلُوۡۤا اِلَیۡکَ فَاَسۡرِ بِاَہۡلِکَ بِقِطۡعٍ مِّنَ الَّیۡلِ وَ لَا یَلۡتَفِتۡ مِنۡکُمۡ اَحَدٌ اِلَّا امۡرَاَتَکَ ؕ اِنَّہٗ مُصِیۡبُہَا مَاۤ اَصَابَہُمۡ ؕ اِنَّ مَوۡعِدَہُمُ الصُّبۡحُ ؕ اَلَیۡسَ الصُّبۡحُ بِقَرِیۡبٍ ﴿۸۱﴾

(11-81) Thereupon the angels said: 'O Lot! We indeed are messengers of your Lord. And your people will in no way be able to hurt you. So depart with your family in a part of the night and let no one of you turn around [89] excepting your wife (who shall not go); for what will befall them shall also befall her. [90] In the morning their promised hour will come. Is not the morning near?'

(89) This meant to impress on them the urgency of the matter so that they should get out of the doomed place and should not even turn round to look behind to see what was happening there. They were warned lest they should be attracted by the loud noises caused by the explosions and by the wailing of the people and thus lag behind in the territory that had been marked for the scourge and was to be overtaken by it.

(90) The doom of the wife of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) is the third incident related in this Surah to serve as a lesson that no relationship can deliver a people from the horrible consequences of their sin.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمۡرُنَا جَعَلۡنَا عَالِیَہَا سَافِلَہَا وَ اَمۡطَرۡنَا عَلَیۡہَا حِجَارَۃً مِّنۡ سِجِّیۡلٍ ۙ مَّنۡضُوۡدٍ ﴿۸۲﴾

(11-82) And when Our command came to pass, We turned the town upside down, and rained on it stones of baked clay, one on another, (91)

(91) Probably the scourge came in the form of a horrible earthquake which turned their habitations upside down and the explosion of a volcano which rained stones on them.

"Stones of layered baked clay" probably refers to the stones that are formed by the underground heat and lava in the volcanic regions. The signs of such a formation are found even today near the Lot Sea.

مُّسَوَّمَةً ۖ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿٨٣﴾

(11-83) marked from your Lord. (92) Nor is the punishment far off from the wrong-doers. (93)

(92) That is, every stone had been specified by Allah to do some particular work of destruction there, and to hit a particular offender.

(93) This was meant to warn the workers of iniquity who were engaged in their evil work, as if to say: You should not consider yourselves immune from scourge as though it were far from you. If it could visit the people of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him), it could overpower you as well. Neither the people of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) were able to defend themselves against Allah, nor can you frustrate Him now.

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ وَلَا تَنقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ إِنِّي أَرَاكُم بِخَيْرٍ وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ مُّحِيطٍ ﴿٨٤﴾

(11-84) And to (the people of) Midian We sent their brother Shu'ayb. (94) He said: 'My people! Serve Allah; you have no god other than Him. And do not diminish the measure and weight. Indeed I see that you are prospering now, but I fear for you the chastisement of an encompassing day in the future.

(94) Please keep in view(E.Ns 69-76 of Surah Al-Aaraf).

وَ یٰقَوۡمِ اَوۡفُوا الۡمِکۡیَالَ وَ الۡمِیۡزَانَ بِالۡقِسۡطِ وَ لَا تَبۡخَسُوا النَّاسَ اَشۡیَآءَہُمۡ وَ لَا تَعۡثَوۡا فِی الۡاَرۡضِ مُفۡسِدِیۡنَ ﴿۸۵﴾

(11-85) My people! Give full measure and weight with justice, do not diminish the goods of others, and do not go about creating corruption in the land.

بَقِیَّتُ اللّٰہِ خَیۡرٌ لَّکُمۡ اِنۡ کُنۡتُمۡ مُّؤۡمِنِیۡنَ ۚ وَ مَاۤ اَنَا عَلَیۡکُمۡ بِحَفِیۡظٍ ﴿۸۶﴾

(11-86) The gains that Allah lets you retain are better for you, if you indeed believe. In any case, I have not been appointed a keeper over you. (95)

(95) That is, I have no power over you. The most I can do for you is to admonish you as a well wisher, but it rests with you to accept my advice or reject it. As you are accountable to Allah and not to me for your deeds, therefore you should fear Him and desist from your mischievous deeds, if you sincerely believe in Him.

قَالُوۡا یٰشُعَیۡبُ اَصَلٰوتُکَ تَاۡمُرُکَ اَنۡ نَّتۡرُکَ مَا یَعۡبُدُ اٰبَآؤُنَاۤ اَوۡ اَنۡ نَّفۡعَلَ فِیۡۤ اَمۡوَالِنَا مَا نَشٰٓؤُا ؕ اِنَّکَ لَاَنۡتَ الۡحَلِیۡمُ الرَّشِیۡدُ ﴿۸۷﴾

(11-87) They replied: 'O Shu'ayb! Does your Prayer enjoin upon you (96) that we should forsake the deities whom our forefathers worshipped, or that we should give up using our wealth as we please? (97) Do you fancy that you, and only you, are forbearing and right-directed?'

(96) This taunting question was an expression of the feelings of hatred those ungodly people cherished against the religious observances of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) and other God fearing pious people. They selected Salat as a target of their taunt because it is the first and foremost outwardly observance of true religion which naturally has always been strongly hated by all ungodly wicked people. This hatred may also be noticed today among those who deliberately intend to follow the wicked ways,

for they consider religious observances to be the greatest threat to their evil ways. As they regard Salat to be a symbol of the coming trouble, they begin to taunt the one who observes it. For they know that the victim of the disease of religiosity will not rest content with his own reformation but will exert his utmost to reform others as well. They fear that he will preach piety and righteous ways to them and criticize their ungodly and immoral ways. That is why Salat becomes the target of the taunts of wicked people. And if the person who observes Salat actually begins to preach the observance of virtues and criticize their evil ways just as they had feared, then they condemn it even more vehemently as though it were the cause of the whole trouble.

(97) These two things clearly distinguish the theory of the way of ignorance from the theory of the way of Islam. The way of ignorance is based on the assumption that one should follow the way of his forefathers, and for the mere reason that it has been inherited from his forefathers. Its second assumption is that one's faith and religion are concerned only with worship, and these have nothing to do with the worldly affairs of life, in which one is absolutely free to do as he pleases. On the other hand, the basic theory of Islam is that every way that is not founded on the submission to Allah is wrong, and, therefore, should not be followed, for no other way has any proof of its truth from reason, knowledge and revelation. Besides, Islam is not confined to the worship of Allah but it covers in its entirety all aspects of cultural, social, economic and political life. This is because all that man possesses really belongs to Allah and, therefore, man has absolutely no right to do as he pleases with his possessions.

Incidentally, this demand of the people of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) that they had every right to do as they pleased with their goods and possessions shows that there is nothing new about the theory of the division of life into separate compartments, religious and mundane. Some three thousand years or so ago they insisted on this division just as western and westernized people insist on it today. And they are absolutely wrong to presume that their division is the result of the light that had dawned upon humanity because of the intellectual progress

that man has made as a result of the evolutionary process. Thus it is clear that it is not light but darkness which prevailed with the same intensity thousands of years ago as it is today and that the conflict of Islam against it is also as old as that.

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّىْ وَرَزَقَنِىْ مِنْهُ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا ؕ وَمَاۤ اُرِيْدُ اَنْ اُخَالِفَكُمْ اِلٰى مَاۤ اَنْهٰىكُمْ عَنْهُ ؕ اِنْ اُرِيْدُ اِلَّا الْاِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ ؕ وَمَا تَوْفِيْقِىْۤ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ ؕ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَاِلَيْهِ اُنِيْبُ ۝٨٨

(11-88) Shu'ayb said: 'My people! What do you think? If I stand on clear evidence from my Lord, and He has also provided me a handsome provision from Himself [98] -(should I be ungrateful to Him and share your error and iniquity?) Nor do I desire to act contrary to what I admonish you. [99] I desire nothing but to set things right as far as I can. My succour is only with Allah. In Him have I put my trust, and to Him do I always turn.

(98) Here rizq implies two things: provision of the knowledge of the truth and provision of the necessities of life from Allah. In the first sense, it refers to the same thing that has been declared in this Surah by Prophets Muhammad, Noah and Salih (peace be upon them all), that is, Allah bestowed on me by revelation that knowledge of the truth, which I already had gained by making keen observations of my own self and of the phenomena of nature. Therefore I cannot be a party to your evil creeds and unlawful practices. In the second sense, it is the answer to this taunt of theirs: Indeed you are the only generous and righteous person left in the land! It meant, so to say, this: When my Lord has bestowed on me both the knowledge of the truth and the good and lawful provisions of life, your taunts cannot turn this favor into disfavor. Therefore I cannot be so ungrateful to Him as to declare your deviations to be the truth and your unlawful practices lawful.

(99) That is, It is a proof of the truth of my claim that I myself practice what I preach to you. For instance, if I had forbidden you to visit the shrines of gods and goddesses but had myself become the guardian of some such shrine, you would have been justified in bringing this charge against me that I was preaching the

doctrine of Tauhid merely for the sake of ruining the business of others in order to make room for my own trade. Likewise, if I had prohibited the use of unlawful means for you but had myself applied the same in my own trade, you would have been justified in charging me with preaching honesty merely for winning good reputation for the prosperity of my own trade. But you yourselves are a witness to this that I myself abstain from those evils which I forbid you to practice and I keep myself pure from those blemishes of which I desire to cleanse you and I follow the way to which I invite you. All this is a clear proof that I believe in the truth of the message I am conveying to you.

وَ يٰقَوْمِ لَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شِقَاقِيْٓ اَنْ يُّصِيْبَكُمْ مِّثْلُ مَآ اَصَابَ قَوْمَ نُوْحٍ اَوْ قَوْمَ هُوْدٍ اَوْ قَوْمَ صٰلِحٍ ؕ وَمَا قَوْمُ لُوْطٍ مِّنْكُمْ بِبَعِيْدٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

(11-89) My people! Let not your opposition to me lead you to guilt that would bring upon you the chastisement that struck earlier the people of Noah, and the people of Hud, and the people of Salih. And the land of the people of Lot is not far from you! (100)

(100) That is, your land is not far from the land of the people of Lot, which has been totally destroyed. It is quite near and what happened did not take place long ago here.

وَ اسْتَغْفِرُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوْبُوْٓا اِلَيْهِ ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ رَحِيْمٌ وَّدُوْدٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

(11-90) Seek the forgiveness of your Lord and turn to Him in repentance. Surely my Lord is Ever Merciful, Most Loving. (101)

(101) Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) brought the attribute of love of Allah for His creation specially to the notice of his people in order to induce them to give up despair and turn to Allah for forgiveness for their evil deeds, so as to say: Allah is not hard hearted and cruel, and cherishes no feelings of enmity towards His creatures. He does not desire to punish them anyhow as if He were to derive pleasure from their torture. As a matter of fact, He inflicts punishment on you only when you transgress all limits and that, too, for the good of mankind. Therefore if you feel

ashamed of your sins and repent of these, you will find Him Forbearing, for He loves His creation very much.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has explained the same thing by citing a parable. He said: Suppose one of you was traveling in a waterless desert and lost his camel on whom he had laden all his provisions for the journey. He made a thorough search for the missing camel, but in vain. Then, in despair of his life, he lay down under a tree. Then, all of a sudden, the camel with all the provisions intact on it appeared before him. Just imagine his happiness. Allah is more pleased than that man, when a sinful servant returns to Him in penitence. There is another incident even more effective than this related by Umar: Once some prisoners of war were brought before the Prophet (peace be upon him). One of them was a mother whose infant child had been lost. This had made her so restless and uneasy that she would hold any child she came across close to her breasts and suckle it. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw this, he put this question to the bystanders: Can you imagine that this mother would ever throw her own child into the fire? We replied, never; not to speak of throwing it into the fire, she would do her utmost in every possible way to prevent it from falling into the fire. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Allah is much more merciful to His servants than this mother is to her child.

Let us consider the same thing from another point of view. It is Allah Who has created love in the hearts of the mother and the father for their child, and without this parental love, they would never have shown the care and the sacrifice they shower on their child; nay, they would have even become its enemies because of the trouble and inconvenience they have to bear for it. From this, it is quite evident that the love of the Creator of this parental affection for His own Creation must be far greater than this parental love.

قَالُوۡا یٰشُعَیۡبُ مَا نَفۡقَهُ کَثِیۡرًا مِّمَّا تَقُوۡلُ وَ اِنَّا لَنَرٰىکَ فِیۡنَا ضَعِیۡفًا ۚ وَ لَوۡ لَا رَهۡطُکَ لَرَجَمۡنٰکَ ۫ وَ مَاۤ اَنۡتَ عَلَیۡنَا بِعَزِیۡزٍ ﴿۹۱﴾

(11-91) They said: 'O Shu'ayb! We do not understand much of what you say. [102] Indeed we see you weak in our midst. Were it not for your kinsmen, we would surely have stoned you for you have no strength to overpower us. [103]

(102) They did not understand what Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) said to them, not because he talked to them in some foreign language or because the theme was too difficult or complicated for them. For he talked to them in their own language and his theme was simple and clear. As a matter of fact, they did not understand because they would not: Their crooked thinking left neither any desire nor any aptitude for understanding his talk. And this is true of all those people who become such slaves of their prejudices and lusts as render them incapable of accepting anything against their preconceived notions. For they are neither inclined to listen to such things nor understand them as though these things were not for them nor were they for them.

(103) While studying this part of the story of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him), it should be kept in view that similar conditions were prevalent at Makkah at the time of the revelation of this story. The Quraish were as blood thirsty to kill the Prophet (peace be upon him) as were the people of Madian to take the life of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him). Just as the people of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) desisted from this evil design because they were afraid of his family, likewise the Quraish were afraid of Bani Hashim and refrained from executing their evil designs. So this story was being related to warn the Quraish that they should learn a lesson from the answer of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him) (Ayats 92-93), as if to say: O people of Quraish, this same is the answer to you from Muhammad (peace be upon him).

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اَرَهْطِيْٓ اَعَزُّ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاتَّخَذْتُمُوْهُ وَرَاۗءَكُمْ ظِهْرِيًّا ۭ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ۝۹۲

(11-92) Shu'ayb said: 'My people! Are my kinsmen mightier with you than Allah that you (hold the kinsmen in awe

while) you cast Allah behind your back? Surely my Lord encompasses all what you do.

وَيٰقَوْمِ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ اِنِّيْ عٰمِلٌ ؕ سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ مَنْ يَّاْتِيْهِ عَذَابٌ يُّخْزِيْهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ كٰذِبٌ ؕ وَارْتَقِبُوْٓا اِنِّيْ مَعَكُمْ رَقِيْبٌ ۝٩٣

(11-93) My people! Go on working according to your way and I will keep working (according to mine). Soon you will come to know who will be afflicted by a humiliating chastisement, and who is proved a liar. And watch, I shall also watch with you.'

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا شُعَيْبًا وَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَاَخَذَتِ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةُ فَاَصْبَحُوْا فِيْ دِيَارِهِمْ جٰثِمِيْنَ ﴿٩٤﴾

(11-94) And when Our command came to pass, We delivered Shu'ayb and those who shared his faith, through Our mercy, and the Blast seized those who were engaged in wrong-doing, so they lay lifeless in their homes

كَاَنْ لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا فِيْهَا ؕ اَلَا بُعْدًا لِّمَدْيَنَ كَمَا بَعِدَتْ ثَمُوْدُ ﴿٩٥﴾

(11-95) as though they had never dwelt in them before. Lo! Away with (the people of) Midian, even as the Thamud were done away with!

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا مُوْسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٩٦﴾

(11-96) And indeed We sent Moses with Our signs and with a clear authority

اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَا۟ئِهٖ فَاتَّبَعُوْۤا اَمْرَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَمَاۤ اَمْرُ فِرْعَوْنَ بِرَشِيْدٍ ﴿٩٧﴾

(11-97) to Pharaoh and his nobles. But they obeyed the command of Pharaoh even though Pharaoh's command was not rightly-directed.

يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فَاَوْرَدَهُمُ النَّارَ ؕ وَبِئْسَ الْوِرْدُ الْمَوْرُوْدُ ﴿٩٨﴾

(11-98) He shall stand at the head of his people on the Day of Resurrection, and will bring them down to the Fire. [104] What a wretched destination to be led to!

(104) From this verse and some other narrations of the Quran it appears that the leaders of a community in this world will be its leaders also on the Day of Resurrection. If they guided and led the people towards virtue, righteousness and truth in this world, their followers will gather together under their banner on the Day of Resurrection and march to the Gardens under their leadership. On the other hand, if they called people to some deviation, immorality or unrighteous ways, their followers will follow them

there also, and march to the fire of Hell under their leadership. The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained this thing in a tradition: On the Day of Resurrection, the banner of the poets of ignorance will be in the hands of Imra-ul-Quais, and all of them will march towards Hell under his leadership.

Now let us try to picture the march of these two processions. It is obvious that the first procession will march happily and joyously, praying for and praising their leaders whose guidance had led them to this happy state of marching to the blessed Paradise. On the other hand, when the followers of the leaders of errors will find themselves in the miserable plight, to which the leaders had brought them, naturally their anger against them will be beyond description. For the followers will march towards Hell, abusing and cursing their leaders, who had brought them to that horrible state of torture.

وَ اُتۡبِعُوۡا فِیۡ هٰذِهٖ لَعۡنَةً وَّیَوۡمَ الۡقِیٰمَةِ ؕ بِئۡسَ الرِّفۡدُ الۡمَرۡفُوۡدُ ﴿۹۹﴾

(11-99) They were pursued by a curse in this world and so will they be on the Day of Resurrection. What an evil reward will they receive!

ذٰلِکَ مِنۡ اَنۡۢبَآءِ الۡقُرٰی نَقُصُّهٗ عَلَیۡکَ مِنۡهَا قَآئِمٌ وَّحَصِیۡدٌ ﴿۱۰۰﴾

(11-100) That is an account of some towns which We recount to you. Of them some are still standing and some have been mown down.

وَمَا ظَلَمۡنٰهُمۡ وَلٰکِنۡ ظَلَمُوۡۤا اَنۡفُسَهُمۡ فَمَاۤ اَغۡنَتۡ عَنۡهُمۡ اٰلِهَتُهُمُ الَّتِیۡ یَدۡعُوۡنَ مِنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰهِ مِنۡ شَیۡءٍ لَّمَّا جَآءَ اَمۡرُ رَبِّکَ ؕ وَمَا زَادُوۡهُمۡ غَیۡرَ تَتۡبِیۡبٍ ﴿۱۰۱﴾

(11-101) We did not wrong them; it is rather they who wronged themselves. And when the command of your Lord came to pass, the gods besides Allah whom they had called upon, did not avail them in the least. They added nothing to them except ruin.

وَکَذٰلِکَ اَخۡذُ رَبِّکَ اِذَاۤ اَخَذَ الۡقُرٰی وَهِیَ ظَالِمَةٌ ؕ اِنَّ اَخۡذَهٗۤ اَلِیۡمٌ شَدِیۡدٌ ﴿۱۰۲﴾

(11-102) Such is the seizing of your Lord that when He does seize the towns immersed in wrong-doing, His seizing is painful, terrible.

اِنَّ فِیۡ ذٰلِکَ لَاٰیَۃً لِّمَنۡ خَافَ عَذَابَ الۡاٰخِرَۃِ ؕ ذٰلِکَ یَوۡمٌ مَّجۡمُوۡعٌ لَّہُ النَّاسُ وَذٰلِکَ یَوۡمٌ مَّشۡہُوۡدٌ ﴿۱۰۳﴾

(11-103) Surely in that is a sign for him who fears the chastisement of the Hereafter. (105) That will be a Day when all men shall be mustered together; that will be a Day when whatever happens shall be witnessed by all.

(105) That is, in these historical events there is a sign which will show conclusively to the one who considers this deeply that the torment of the Hereafter is inevitable, as warned by the Messengers. One can also judge from this how terrible it will be. This knowledge will fill one with such fear that will keep him on the straight way.

Now let us consider the question: How are these historical events a sign of the Hereafter and the chastisement therein. Everyone who makes a critical study of history with this consideration that it is not merely a collection of events, but also a means of drawing logical conclusions, will find that the rise and fall of communities and nations has been taking place in a regular succession. Moreover, one will find that this rise and fall takes place in accordance with some moral laws in an extraordinary way. This is a clear proof that man is subordinate to the Sovereign, Who is ruling over the universe in accordance with some rational moral laws. Accordingly, He raises up those who keep the moral limits above a certain minimum standard set for this purpose and degrades those who fall below it. Then He gives respite to the latter to mend their ways, but if they do not avail of it and continue their downward march and fall below the limit set for their complete degradation, He annihilates them in a way as to serve as a lesson for others. The fact that these events always take place in a regular cycle leaves no shadow of doubt that rewards and punishments are permanent parts of the law of His kingdom.

A further consideration of the chastisements that were inflicted on different communities shows that, though these punishments fulfilled the demands of justice to some extent, there was still need of more to fulfill all the demands of justice, for these criminals were punished only for those sins which they themselves committed but not for those committed by the succeeding communities, which followed the bad example left by them as their predecessors. It is obvious from the study of history that the law of retribution must take its course and justice demands that they should be punished for the evil legacy they left for others to follow after them. Common sense and justice demand that life in this world should be reproduced in its entirety in order to fulfill all the demands of the law of retribution. The just Sovereign will, therefore, bring into existence all those people for this purpose and award them due punishments. (Please see also (E.N. 10 of Surah Yunus).

وَمَا نُؤَخِّرُهٗۤ اِلَّا لِاَجَلٍ مَّعْدُوْدٍ ١٠٤

(11-104) Nor shall We withhold it except till an appointed term.

يَوْمَ يَاْتِ لَا تَكَلَّمُ نَفْسٌ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ فَمِنْهُمْ شَقِيٌّ وَّسَعِيْدٌ ١٠٥

(11-105) And when the appointed Day comes, no one shall even dare to speak except by the leave of Allah. (106) Then some will be declared wretched, others blessed.

(106) This is to warn these foolish people who depend on the promises of their intercessors that they would protect them from the torment of the Day. They have been warned to desist from the evil deeds they are committing in the hope that their intercessors would not rest content till they succeed in obtaining from Allah permits of forgiveness for their sinful followers. This is because they believe them to be the beloved favorites of Allah Who cannot afford to displease them at any cost. Then they have been told that, not to speak of wielding any such influence, they shall not dare utter a word except with His permission. No saint,

no angel, howsoever high, is so powerful or influential as to speak a word or make any recommendation in the Court of the Highest Sovereign unless He Himself permits it. Therefore such people as make offerings to others than Allah will be utterly disillusioned and disappointed on that Day, for they will come to know that they were foolish in relying on their intercessors and committing evil deeds in the world in the hope that they would deliver them from the torment of the Day.

فَاَمَّا الَّذِيۡنَ شَقُوۡا فَفِى النَّارِ لَهُمۡ فِيۡهَا زَفِيۡرٌ وَّشَهِيۡقٌ ۱۰۶

(11-106) As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire, and in it they shall sigh and groan.

خٰلِدِيۡنَ فِيۡهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالۡاَرۡضُ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ رَبُّكَ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيۡدُ ۱۰۷

(11-107) They shall abide in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, (107) unless your Lord may will otherwise. Surely your Lord does whatsoever He wills. (108)

(107) This is to emphasize that there is no power that can deliver them from that everlasting torment. Of course, Allah has full powers to forgive anyone He wills or to make a change in the term of the torment of anyone, for He Himself devises laws for Himself and there is no law higher than His Law so as to limit His powers.

(108) In (Ayats 107-108), the words “the heavens and the earth” might have been used idiomatically to denote the everlasting state or they might refer to the new earth and the heavens that will be made in the next world. Anyhow these cannot be the earth and the heavens in their existing state for two reasons. First, according to the Quran, they shall be changed on the Day of Resurrection. Secondly, the events that are being related in these verses will happen in the Hereafter.

وَاَمَّا الَّذِيۡنَ سُعِدُوۡا فَفِى الۡجَنَّةِ خٰلِدِيۡنَ فِيۡهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالۡاَرۡضُ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ رَبُّكَ ؕ عَطَآءً غَيۡرَ مَجۡذُوۡذٍ ۱۰۸

(11-108) And as for those who are blessed, they shall abide in the Garden as long as the heavens and the earth endure, unless your Lord may will otherwise. (109) They shall enjoy an unceasing gift.

(109) That is, they will not be sent to the Garden nor will dwell there in accordance with any extraneous law which might have forced Allah to let them dwell therein anyhow. They shall dwell there simply because of His favor. He has full powers to make any changes, if He will, about them.

فَلَا تَكُ فِيْ مِرْيَةٍ مِّمَّا يَعْبُدُ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۭ مَا يَعْبُدُوْنَ اِلَّا كَمَا يَعْبُدُ اٰبَاۗؤُهُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ۭ وَاِنَّا لَمُوَفُّوْهُمْ نَصِيْبَهُمْ غَيْرَ مَنْقُوْصٍ ١٠٩؀

(11-109) [O Prophet!] Have no doubt about what they worship. For they worship what their fathers worshipped before. (110) And (yet) We shall grant them their due portion in full, diminishing of it nothing.

(110) It does not mean at all that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had any doubts concerning their deities. Though these words have been addressed to the Prophet (peace be upon him), as a matter of fact they are meant for the common people. What they mean is this: No reasonable person should entertain any presumption that the people who worship the deities must have been convinced of their miraculous powers, otherwise they would not have worshiped them nor offered gifts to them nor invoked their help. The fact of the matter is that their worship, their offerings and their prayers are not based on any knowledge nor any experience nor any real observation, but are the result of blind imitation of their forefathers. The proof of their falsehood is that the deities could not save them when Allah's scourge visited their worshipers who were completely annihilated in spite of them.

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ فَاخْتُلِفَ فِيْهِ ۭ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۭ وَاِنَّهُمْ لَفِيْ شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيْبٍ ١١٠

(11-110) And We certainly gave Moses the Book before, and there arose disagreements about it (even as there are disagreements now about the Book revealed to you). (111) Had it not been for a decree that had already gone forth from your Lord, the matter would have long been decided between them. (112) Indeed they are in a disquieting doubt about it.

(111) It means this: There is nothing new in the different opinions expressed by different people regarding the Quran. They behaved in the same manner towards the Book that was given to Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). Therefore, O Muhammad (peace be upon him), do not be disheartened by their rejection of the Quran, though its teachings are simple and plain.

(112) This is to reassure the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the believers that they should patiently wait for the consequences of the misbehavior of the unbelievers towards the Quran. But this will happen in due course as previously ordained by Allah, for Allah does not make haste in passing judgment, though the people demand haste.

وَ اِنَّ كُلًّا لَّمَّا لَيُوَفِّيَنَّهُمْ رَبُّكَ اَعْمٰلَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّهٗ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿۱۱۱﴾

(11-111) Surely your Lord will recompense all to the full for their deeds. For indeed He is well aware of all what they do.

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَاۤ اُمِرْتَ وَ مَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَ لَا تَطْغَوْا ؕ اِنَّهٗ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿۱۱۲﴾

(11-112) So remain, (O Muhammad), you and those who have returned with you (to the fold of faith and obedience from unbelief and rebellion) steadfast (in adhering to the straight way) as you were commanded. And do not exceed the limits of (service to Allah). For certainly He is aware of all what you do.

وَلَا تَرْكَنُوْٓا اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ ۙ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ اَوْلِيَآءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنْصَرُوْنَ ١١٣

(11-113) And do not incline towards the wrong-doers lest the Fire might seize you and you will have none as your protector against Allah; and then you will not be helped from anywhere.

وَاَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ الَّيْلِ ۭ اِنَّ الْحَسَنٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّاٰتِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ ذِكْرٰى لِلذّٰكِرِيْنَ ١١٤

(11:114) And establish the Prayer at the two ends of the day and in the first hours of the night. (113) Indeed the good deeds drive away the evil deeds. This is a Reminder to those who are mindful of Allah. (114)

(113) This was to urge Salat at three times, that is, morning, evening and Isha. This shows that this was revealed before Salat had been made obligatory five times a day during the Miraj. (For explanation, see (E.N. 95 of Surah Al-Isra), (E.N. 111 of Surah Taha), and (E.N. 124 of Surah Ar-Rum)).

(114) This is the remedy for eradicating evil from the world: Do good deeds and defeat evil with them. The best way of making you virtuous is to establish salat, which will remind you of Allah over and over again: which will produce those good characteristics in you that shall help you fight successfully against the systematic and united front of evil that has been formed against the mission of the truth. This will also enable you to establish practically the system of virtue and reform. (For explanation see (E.Ns 77-79 of Surah Al-Ankaboot)).

وَاصْبِرْ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُضِيْعُ اَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١١٥﴾

(11-115) And be patient; for indeed Allah never lets the reward of those who do good go to waste.

فَلَوْلَا كَانَ مِنَ الْقُرُوْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ اُولُوْا بَقِيَّةٍ يَّنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْفَسَادِ فِى الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِّمَّنْ اَنْجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّبَعَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مَآ اُتْرِفُوْا فِيْهِ وَكَانُوْا مُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿١١٦﴾

(11-116) Why were there not, out of the generations that passed away before you, righteous men who would forbid others from causing corruption on the earth? And if such were there, they were only a few whom We had saved from those generations, or else the wrong-doers kept pursuing the ease and comfort which had been conferred upon them, thus losing themselves in sinfulness.

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرٰى بِظُلْمٍ وَّاَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١١٧﴾

(11-117) And your Lord is not such as would wrongfully destroy human habitations while their inhabitants are righteous. (115)

(115) In this passage, the real cause of the fall of the communities mentioned in(Ayats 25-99)has been pointed out in a very instructive manner. In reviewing their history Allah declares that the cause of the downfall of not only these but of all the former communities was this: When Allah bestowed His favors on them, they abused these favors and were so intoxicated with their own prosperity that they began to make mischief in the land. By and by, their collective conscience became so corrupt that no righteous persons were left among them to forbid evil and, if a few were left, their voice was so weak that they could not prevent them from causing mischief. As a result of this, evil became so strong and prevalent among them as to warrant the scourge of Allah. Otherwise Allah bears no enmity against His servants that He should destroy them without any just cause, while they were performing righteous works. This has been mentioned here for impressing the following three things.

First, it is imperative that there should be some persons who should invite the people to virtue and forbid evil. For Allah approves virtue only and tolerates evil for its sake so long as there is any potential good left in them. But when a community has no righteous persons left in it and contains only wicked ones, or even if there be some such righteous persons in it as are so weak that nobody pays any heed to them, and the community as a whole rushes headlong towards moral degradation, then Allah's scourge becomes its inevitable doom.

Second, a community, which tolerates everything and everyone except those few who invite it to righteous deeds seals its own doom and invites its destruction.
Third, it is clear from this passage that the destiny of a community is determined by the influence the righteous people can wield in it. If it contains such a number of good persons as may be able to eradicate evil and mischief and establish virtue and righteousness, a general scourge is withheld from it so as to afford an opportunity to them for carrying on their work of reform. On the other hand, if the number of the righteous persons in it remains too small to carry on the reform work, and the community does not tolerate them at all and does not allow them to perform their reform work, then that community incurs its own destruction, for thus it proves itself to be a worthless community which has no justification for its existence. (For further explanation, See (E.N. 34 of Surah Az-Zariat).

وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّکَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ اُمَّۃً وَّاحِدَۃً وَّلَا یَزَالُوْنَ مُخْتَلِفِیْنَ ﴿۱۱۸﴾

(11-118) Had your Lord so willed, He would surely have made mankind one community. But as things stand, now they will not cease to differ among themselves and to follow erroneous ways

اِلَّا مَنْ رَّحِمَ رَبُّکَ ؕ وَلِذٰلِکَ خَلَقَھُمْ ؕ وَتَمَّتْ کَلِمَۃُ رَبِّکَ لَاَمْلَـَٔنَّ جَھَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّۃِ وَالنَّاسِ اَجْمَعِیْنَ ﴿۱۱۹﴾

(11-119) except for those on whom your Lord has mercy. And it is for this (exercise of freedom of choice) that He has created them. (116) And the word of your Lord was fulfilled: 'Indeed I will fill the Hell, with men and jinn, altogether.'

(116) This is the answer to the objection raised in the name of taqdir (destiny) against the principle that has been laid down in the preceding verse for the destruction of the wicked communities. It is this: Why should these communities be punished for lack of a sufficient number of righteous persons in them? Why didn't Allah Himself will to produce that sufficient number of righteous persons in it? Allah has answered this objection, so as to say: It is not the will of Allah to bind mankind inherently to a fixed course of life as He has bound the vegetable and animal life. Had it been so, there would have been no need of sending the Messengers and the Books for inviting mankind to the faith. For, in that case all human beings would have been born Muslims and born believers and there would have been no unbelief and no disobedience. But it is the will of Allah to grant freedom of choice and action to man so that he may be free to choose and follow any way of life. That is why He has left open both the way to Paradise and the way to Hell for man and given every individual and every community the opportunity to choose and follow either of the two ways with full freedom and win any of the two abodes as a result of his own efforts and exertions. It is obvious that this scheme of Allah demands that it should be based on the freedom of choice and the option to adopt faith or unbelief. This is why Allah does not compel a community to the right way if it itself intends to follow the wrong way, and plans

and works for it. Allah's scheme does not interfere with the plans and works of such a community. When it makes deliberate arrangements to mold the wicked, unjust, and sinful people, He does not supply it with righteous persons by birth to set it right. Every community is free to produce good or bad people as it wills. And if a community wills to follow a wrong way as a community, leaving little room for the production and the development of the righteous people in order to raise up the standard of virtue, God does not will to coerce it to follow the righteous way. He will let it follow the way it chooses for itself with its inevitable consequences. On the contrary, Allah shows His mercy to that community which produces a sufficiently large number of such people as accept the invitation to virtue, and leaves room in its collective system for such people to work for its reform and purification. (For further explanation, See (E.N. 24 of Surah Al-Anaam).

وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهٖ فُؤَادَكَ وَجَآءَكَ فِيْ هٰذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَّذِكْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ١٢٠

(11-120) (O Muhammad!) We narrate these anecdotes of Messengers to you that We may strengthen through them your heart. In these anecdotes come to you the truth, and an exhortation, and a reminder for the believers.

وَقُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ اِنَّا عٰمِلُوْنَ ١٢١

(11-121) As for those who are bent on not believing, tell them: 'Work according to your way and we are working according to our way.

وَانْتَظِرُوْا اِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُوْنَ ١٢٢

(11-122) And do wait for the end of things; we too are waiting.

وَلِلّٰهِ غَيْبُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَاِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْاَمْرُ كُلُّهٗ فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ ؕ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ١٢٣

(11-123) All that is hidden in the heavens and the earth lies within the power of Allah. To Him are all matters referred for judgement. So do serve Him, and place in Him all your trust. Your Lord is not heedless of what you do. (117)

(117) At the end of the discourse, Allah has warned the champions of kufr, and comforted the believers, so as to say: Allah is closely watching the behaviors of both the parties in the conflict between kufr and Islam, and the Sovereign is fully aware of all that is happening in His kingdom. He is watching and controlling everything with perfect wisdom. He will reward richly the champions of the truth and will not let go waste their efforts and exertions. And though He is showing tolerance to the champions of kufr, and giving them respite, He will take them to task because they are unjustly persecuting the standard bearers of the truth and are spreading chaos in the land, and exerting their utmost to put obstacles in the way of the work of reform. All these things are in the knowledge of Allah and the evil doers shall have to bear the consequences of their misdeeds, and the true believers will ultimately come out successful.